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13 JANUARY 1987

USSR REPORT
MILITARY AFFAIRS

MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No 7, July 1986

Except where indicated otherwise in the table of contents the following is a complete translation of the Russian-language monthly journal VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL.

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CSO: 1801/001

SUBMARINE OPERATIONS IN DIFFERENT MARITIME THEATERS OF GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, July 86 (signed to press 25 Jun 86) pp 11-21

[Article by Hero of the Soviet Union, Flt Adm V. N. Chernavin, Commander-in-Chief of the Navy and USSR Deputy Minister of Defense, published under the rubric "Soviet Military Art"]

[Text] An important component part in the armed struggle of the Soviet Navy at sea during the years of the Great Patriotic War was submarine operations. In possessing such specific qualities as great endurance, range and covertness, they were able for an extended time to perform diverse missions in areas inaccessible for the other branches of the naval forces.

By the start of the war the submarines were distributed in the following manner: the Northern Fleet had 15 of them, the Baltic had 71 and the Black Sea Fleet 44.(1) In organizational terms they were formed into divisions and brigades, the number of which changed during the war depending upon the basing conditions, the number of battleworthy subs and the existing organization of command of their combat activities.

The content of the missions of the submarine forces as well as the forms and methods of their combat employment were determined by the developing situation and by the nature of fleet operations. The deployment of the submarines at their stations for combat operations against the vessels and ships of Germany, Romania and Italy, according to the order of the People's Commissariat of the Navy commenced on the very first day of the war.(2) Here the territorial waters of Bulgaria and Turkey were not to be violated. Subsequently, with the change in the military-political situation in the coastal area of the Black Sea instructions were issued as of 10 August to destroy all ships and vessels with the exception of Turkish ones, and from 14 October, all targets detected in the area of the station.(3)

In the course of the war, the main mission of submarines was to disrupt enemy sealanes. In addition, submarines were also involved in protecting our own sealanes, in conducting reconnaissance and patrol duty, navigation-hydrographic support for the combat operations of surface vessels and the landing of amphibious forces, the transporting of men and cargo and so forth. For successfully carrying out all these missions and primarily the main one of

disrupting the enemy sea movements, at times there were not enough forces. For example, in the Northern Fleet during the entire war, the number of submarines did not exceed 18-22. Combat damage and the wearing out of materiel with limited repair capability impeded the rapid repairing of the boats. For this reason from 2 to 7 submarines operated simultaneously on the sealanes in the Arctic (see the diagram). Moreover, under the conditions of the polar day they were required to move 20-30 miles off-shore for charging their storage batteries and this took up around 50-60 percent of all time spent on station.

For a number of reasons, the submarine operational utilization factor was also insufficiently high in the other fleets. In the Baltic Fleet due to the sustained losses and major damage, in 1942-1945, from 20 to 29 submarines could be involved in combat operations on the sealanes.

The failures of our troops during the first period of the war on the southern flank of the Soviet-German Front had a negative effect also on the employment of the submarine forces of the Black Sea Fleet, the combat operations of which, like the other fleet forces, were carried out at that time under conditions of a growing threat to the naval bases from land.(4) In line with the deteriorating basing conditions, the submarines reduced active combat operations on the enemy sealanes. Thus, while over the first 4 months of the war there were 12-13 subs each month in the Black Sea and the total length of their stay on station was over 110 days, in the first half of 1942 these indicators dropped, respectively, to 9 and 85.(5)

Still, regardless of the difficult situation in the combat areas on the sealanes during the first period of the war, the submarines of the operational fleets in 1941-1942 made around 460 combat cruises, and the length of their stay on station totaled more than 5,400 days. Using torpedoes, mines and artillery they destroyed, according to data adjusted after the war, over 100 ships and combat vessels.(6) The constant threat of an underwater attack forces the enemy to prepare more carefully for the support of the convoy moves and this inevitably involved a greater time to deliver cargo to the destination and an increase in various outlays.

However, because of their limited size, they were unable to cut the enemy sealanes in all places or for a long time. They were merely capable of disrupting these sealanes.

An analysis of the results of submarine combat operations in 1941-1942 was provided in the order of the people's commissar of the Navy of 7 February 1943.(7) This pointed out that as a result of the correct choice of the place of the attacks against the most vulnerable centers of shipping and tenacity in locating targets, the enemy had suffered substantial losses. The combat experience and initiative of the submarine commanders had risen significantly. In the course of seeking out and destroying the vessels and ships, they showed activity and tenacity. This was particularly confirmed during the successful submarine operations on the Baltic Sea in 1942 in the crossing of submarine barriers and minefields.

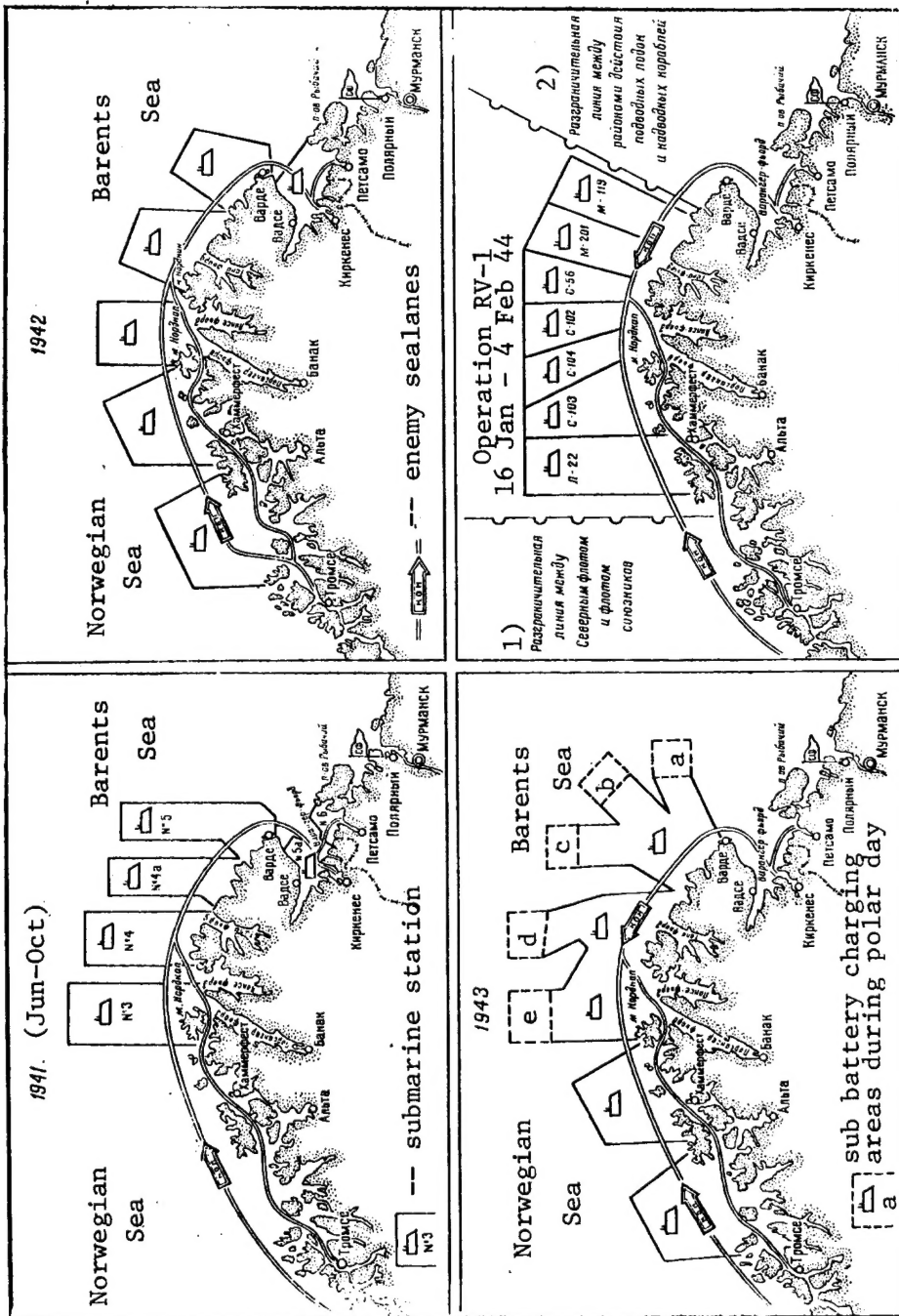


Diagram of Submarine Stations of Northern Fleet
in the Years of the Great Patriotic War

Key: 1--Demarcation line between Northern Fleet and Allied Fleet
2--Demarcation line between submarine stations and combat areas of surface ships

In the process of combat, new tactical procedures were developed for employing the weapons and equipment. The introduction into combat practice of volley fire with a time interval for launching the torpedoes increased the success rate of the attacks by more than 2-fold in comparison with the aimed firing of a single torpedo.(8) The use of direction finders in locating targets and in combat maneuvering provided an opportunity to close in for the attack under conditions of poor visibility while mastering the system of bubble-free firing increased concealment and surprise.

At the same time, the order of the people's commissar of the Navy also pointed to a number of shortcomings in organizing submarine employment, in their command and in the combat support of their activities. Thus, mention was made of the lack of cooperation between submarines and surface vessels and particularly with aviation, reducing the effectiveness of their operations. The routine employment of individual submarines, without considering changes in the situation, in limited areas made it possible for the enemy to spot them and choose new safe routes. The staffs of the fleets and brigades did not pay sufficient attention to maneuvering the stations or to the more accurate guidance of submarines to the convoys based on reconnaissance data. The Baltic Fleet submarines crossed the submarine barriers basically independently, since the neutralization of the enemy antisubmarine defenses was not sufficiently effective. Shortcomings were also pointed out in the tactical training of the subcrews, in particular, in organizing the search for targets at night and in poor visibility, and in using the periscope and carrying out repeat attacks.

The command of the fleets had to base the operational and tactical employment of submarines on independent and joint actions with aviation and surface vessels. Along with the method of the cruising of individual submarines, it was recommended that wider use be made of their successive movement along the enemy sealanes as well as employ cooperation of neighboring subs.

The Navy Directorate of Submarine Operations and the fleet sections of submarine operations established in January 1943 played a major role in improving the employment of Navy submarine forces in the fight on the enemy sealanes. The basic functions of these organizations were to organize combat training, to study combat experience, to work out and introduce into practice new methods and tactical procedures, to organize operational-tactical cooperation of the subs with other navy forces, primarily aviation, as well as the training and organizing of their group actions.(9)

The work of the instructor at the Navy Academy, Capt 1st Rank A. V. Tomashevich, was of great help to the submarine commanders in increasing the level of tactical knowledge. This work investigated the combat experience of the submarines in 1941-1942, and using specific examples showed the positive aspects of commander activities, it disclosed the reasons for shortcomings and worked out recommendations on employing the most effective procedures for locating the targets, combat maneuvering in the process of the attack under various combat conditions and the employment of different types of weapons. In particular, specific recommendations were given for improving the organization of the main submarine command posts; for selecting the optimum depth for the travel of torpedoes depending upon the conditions of attack (the

depth of the area, the draft of the target and sea conditions) and the range of fire; maneuvering with non-periscope and periscope-acoustic attacks employing listening devices.

The basic areas for increasing the effective employment of submarines in the fight on the sealanes were: increasing the combat capability of the boats by various improvements and equipping them with new technology; introducing into practice new tactical procedures; improving the forms and methods of individual and group sub operations both independently as well as in cooperation with other naval forces, as well as improved combat command of the submarines at sea.

The combat experience of the submarines during the first period of the war indicated that the length of their stay at sea could be increased by the additional taking on of fuel in certain main ballast tanks. Insignificant technical improvements made it possible to increase the endurance of submarines of the "M," "S," "Shch" and "A" class by more than 30 percent and of the "L" and "D" classes by 50 percent. The time the submarines could continuously remain under water was substantially increased after outfitting them with a new convection type of purification systems and the installing of the Sprut depth stabilizers on them. In addition to saving electric power, the Sprut provided an opportunity to increase the target detection range using listening devices and thereby promptly commence maneuvering for coming in on the torpedo attack.

A significant role in developing the methods of operating on the sealanes and in increasing the effectiveness and secrecy of employing the torpedo weapons was played by such devices commissioned on the submarines in 1943 and 1944 as the extendable antenna, the Drakon-129 ultrasound underwater surveillance device (UZPN), the ET-80 wakeless electric torpedo and a device for incorporating in the torpedoes a spread angle with a spread volley fire. Thus, with the arming of the submarines with the Drakon-129 UZPN and the extendable antenna, a real opportunity arose for organizing both their tactical cooperation as well as operational cooperation with other fleet forces. They were able to maintain contact between themselves in a submerged condition up to a distance of 5 miles and this was an essential condition for organizing employment of the submarines as part of tactical groups.(10) The Drakon-129 UZPN were very useful to the submariners in crossing minefields. With its aid, well-trained sonar operators could detect mines at a distance up to 5-7 cable lengths. This made it possible to clarify the boundaries of the minefields, to find passages through them and promptly avoid mines. The station method and the cruising method in limited areas, in being widely employed in 1941-1942, under the conditions of increased intensity of convoy traffic and the growing mine danger, were not sufficiently effective. Maneuvering on a small station (600-900 square miles) without the right to go out of it caused the submarines to wait passively for the targets and impeded their avoidance of pursuit by the antisubmarine forces. Cruising in larger areas made it possible for them to more actively carry out an independent search for the enemy but this was also limited. For recharging the storage batteries, the submarines left these areas and the sealanes remained without surveillance (see the diagram). Also imperfect during this period was the organizing of submarine command at sea. At the start of the war, they were

employed according to the personal instructions of the fleet commanders. However, in the difficult situation in the maritime theaters, such centralization reduced effectiveness of submarine command. Soon thereafter this began to be provided by the brigade commanders.

A liaison officer was assigned from a brigade to organize cooperation from the formations of the other branches of naval forces. For example, in the Baltic Fleet, under the commander of the Ostrov Naval Base there was permanently assigned one of the commanders from the submarine divisions, while on the staff of the fleet Air Forces was the deputy chief of staff from the brigade or an officer for organic reconnaissance. The liaison officer who was on the staff of the fleet Air Forces received air reconnaissance data and passed these on to the brigade staff where they were processed and transmitted to the boats. On the basis of intelligence data, orders were worked out for redeploying the boats to areas with the most intense ship traffic or for guiding them to convoys. The fleet staff as well as the Air Forces staff were informed of this. Guidance was provided by transmitting data on the location and the elements of convoy movement to the subs.

Such a method of employing air reconnaissance data did not always produce the proper result. The problem was that reconnaissance was carried out predominantly in the daylight hours under good weather conditions, that is, when the boats were submerged. They could only randomly receive information from the extendable antenna in viewing the horizon through the periscope. The information transmitted to them by shore communications centers at night was often out of date.

The experience gained in conducting submarine operations employing air reconnaissance data made it possible to work out theoretically and at the end of 1943 actually introduce into combat practice of the Northern Fleet a new method which was called a "hanging screen." This presupposed the deployment of several submarines at designated waiting sectors some 25-30 miles to sea of the line of the defensive minefield. They literally hung over the probable convoy routes and with the obtaining of air reconnaissance data arrived at the designated rendezvous point with the target and independently conducted a search for it. Here the attack area was not limited. After battle the boats returned to their sectors.

The merit of this group method was that the initial position of the submarines was chosen outside intense enemy antisubmarine defenses. Particularly important was the reduced probability of encountering mines which represented the greatest danger for the boats. However, the prompt arrival on the convoy course depended totally upon the dependability of radio contact with the reconnaissance aircraft and the shore communications centers as well as the reliability of the data obtained from them.

A new feature in the employment of submarines in 1941 was their participation in operations together with other branches of naval forces. The first such operation under the code name RV-1 (see the diagram) was carried out from 16 January through 4 February 1944. Involved in it were 9 submarines (5 in the attack group, 2 reconnaissance and 2 reserve). Through the fleet staff as well as the staff of the diverse formations, they cooperated closely with

aviation, destroyers, torpedo boats and shore artillery, making it possible to launch coordinated successive attacks against a significant portion of the enemy sealanes.

The culmination point in the activities of the Black Sea Fleet submarines was their participation in April-May 1944 in the operation of defeating the troop convoys of the 17th German Army.(11) A month prior to the start of the operation, the fleet commander ordered the number of subs on station to be reduced in the aim of effectively preparing a large number of them as possible for the forthcoming combat. The brigade staff issued a temporary order on operations for the sub group in cooperating with the aviation, and coordinated the organization of communications with the staff of the fleet Air Forces. The brigade commander conducted tactical games with the submarine commanders. The area of forthcoming operations was divided into 18 positions and this made it possible to base the employment of the submarines on the station-maneuver method. The fleet commander entrusted command of the submarines to the fleet chief of submarine operations, Rear Adm P. I. Boltunov, who was acting as the brigade commander. A total of 13 subs participated in the operation. Their command was precise and flexible. With a change in the situation in the area or with the receiving of new data on areas where enemy ships and vessels had accumulated, the submarines moved to other positions, that is, they maneuvered their stations.

Operational cooperation of the forces involved in the operation consisted in a simultaneous actions on the sealanes: the near approaches to Sevastopol were the combat zone of the torpedo boats while the distant ones were for the submarines; aircraft made attacks against the convoys over the entire route and guided the submarines to them. Thus, the submarines received directly from them 125 radiograms and detected 6 convoys using their data. But the most effective was an independent search conducted by the submarines and making it possible to detect 54 convoys.(12) In using the tactical liaison radio network, the submarines exchanged target designations among themselves. As a result of such traffic, 44 radiograms were transmitted and received. The effective employment of the submarine forces in the joint operation produced good results: over a period of 28 days, the submariners sunk 16 vessels and ships with a total tonnage of 31,770 tons and damaged the transport "Firuz".(13) In September 1944, after the halting of military operations on the maritime sector, the Black Sea Fleet submarines returned to their bases.

From the autumn of 1944, after Finland pulled out of the war, the operations of the Baltic Fleet submarine forces intensified, particularly on the enemy sealanes which were the main ones in supporting the Nazi troop groupings pressed to the sea.

The improvement during the war for the forms and methods for employing the submarines, the choice of the areas and the development of their tactics on enemy sealanes were brought about primarily by increased effectiveness in the employment of torpedo weapons. The use of mines by submarines even on a relatively small scale also greatly impeded navigation and combat activities of the enemy navies. Some 90 mine settings were carried out with the release of 1,749 mines and which destroyed over 50 ships and vessels.(14)

Results of USSR Navy Submarine Operations
During Years of Great Patriotic War

Years	1941		1942		1943		1944		1945		Total	
Flts	TR	FS	TR	FS	TR	FS	TR	FS	TR	FS	TR	FS
S U N K												
NF	13/18	3/2	17/29	5/8	18/31	5/14	11/9	3/12	---	---	59/87	16/36
BF	3/4	1/0	29/33	1/2	---	---	13/16	1/1	13/13	0/1	58/56	3/4
BSF	5/0	0/0	14/2	1/3	13/13	10/7	8/7	3/4	---	---	40/22	14/14
Total	21/22	4/2	60/54	7/13	31/44	15/21	32/32	7/17	13/13	0/1	157/165	33/54

D A M A G E D												
NF	0/0	0/0	2/1	0/1	4/6	0/2	2/3	1/2	---	---	8/10	1/5
BF	1/0	0/0	2/0	0/0	---	---	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/1	3/0	0/1
BSF	0/1	0/0	5/2	0/0	3/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	---	---	9/3	2/0
Total	1/1	0/0	9/3	0/1	7/6	1/2	3/3	2/2	0/0	0/1	20/13	3/6

N o t e s : 1. The numerator shows the number of transports and fighting ships the sinking and damaging of which were reliably confirmed, while the denominator shows those not confirmed by foreign sources known to us.

2. The damage caused to the enemy by mine weapons of submarines is not shown.

3. The table has been compiled from archival materials and foreign sources.

Key: TR -- Transport; FS -- Fighting ship; NF -- Northern Fleet;
BF -- Baltic Fleet; BSF -- Black Sea Fleet.

In the course of combat operations on the sealanes, particularly during the first period of the war, in attacking individual vessels, small shipping and in the aims of self-defense, the submarines sometimes employed artillery. However, with the appearance of decoy ships and the strengthening of antisubmarine defenses by the enemy, the artillery began to be used extremely rarely.

With increased activity by the German Fleet in the Arctic, submarines began to be used in defense of our own communications. They were deployed for the first time for this purpose to defend convoy PQ-12 in March 1942. Subsequently, starting with PQ-13, subs participated systematically in fleet

operations to defend the Allied convoys. In the second half of 1943, in line with the arising threat to our Arctic sealanes, seven submarines were sent into the Kara Sea. In the other fleets, their employment for the defense of the sealanes was of a limited nature.

The important tactical quality of submarines, their covertness, determined their involvement in carrying out reconnaissance missions such as detecting the main routes of enemy vessels, minefields, antilanding defenses on individual areas of the coast, the antisubmarine defense systems in the maritime theaters; for collecting information on the navigational and hydrometeorological situation; for landing reconnaissance and saboteur groups.

A portion of the submarines was deployed, particularly during the first period of the war, on the distant approaches to ports, bases and landing-accessible areas of the coast for conducting patrol duty and for promptly detecting enemy naval forces. In all instances of the appearance of enemy ships, vessels and aircraft, they were obliged to report to the fleet staffs.

Due to the developing situation on the land and maritime theaters, the submarines were also employed for transporting cargo and personnel. The involvement of the subs in transport assumed a wide scope in the defense of Sevastopol. In May-June 1942, when the supply of the troops in the Sevastopol Defensive Area by vessels became impossible, all the submarines which were not being overhauled carried out this mission. Regardless of the strong resistance by enemy surface vessels, aviation and shore artillery as well as the constant threat of the poisoning of the personnel by the vapors of the transported gasoline, their explosion and the outbreak of fires, 23 submarines made 77 trips, delivering to Sevastopol some 574 tons of fuel for aircraft and tanks, 1,169 tons of food, 2,264 tons of ammunition, while carrying to the ports and bases of the Caucasus some 1,411 men (basically wounded) and 2.8 tons of valuable cargo.(15) In 1943, K-21 (commander, Capt 2d Rank N. A. Lunin), upon instructions of the command of the Northern Fleet, delivered 15 tons of fuel to Shch-402 (commander, Capt Lt N. G. Stolbov) which was in the combat area.(16)

Thus, the Soviet submarines during the years of the Great Patriotic War carried out a broad range of missions the fulfillment of which resulted in a better operational situation not only in the operational zones of the fleets but also on the maritime sectors of the fronts. Thus, in the second half of August 1942, the member of the Politburo of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee, A. A. Zhdanov, in the course of talking with the submariners of the Baltic Fleet, pointed out that their combat activities were of great importance for the Leningrad Front.(17) In addition, the sinking of vessels with strategic cargo caused harm to the enemy's military economy. The active operations of submarines in the Baltic in 1942 disrupted the continuous supply by sea of the Nazi troops fighting on the Leningrad sector and diverted significant resources for establishing submarine barriers causing an additional strain in the operation of the German Military industry. In successfully employing torpedo, mine and artillery weapons, they along with aviation were that force at sea which caused the enemy the greatest losses (see the table). As an example, enemy losses from the actions of our submarines in the total losses from the actions of the diverse Navy forces

were: 22.7 percent on the Baltic Sea, 32.4 percent on the Black Sea and 37.5 percent on the Berents Sea. (18)

The Soviet submariners had to fight under exceptionally difficult conditions with the constantly growing resistance of the antisubmarine forces up to 1944. In seeking targets they were forced to enter fjords and bases, and cross numerous minefields. But, regardless of the difficulties, the effectiveness of submarine operations constantly increased. This was caused by the gaining of combat experience by the crews, by the improvement in new tactical procedures and methods, by the better weapons and equipment and by better combat command of the submarines. Effective party political work had a great impact upon the successful carrying out of the missions. This was carried out daily by the military commissars, by the party and Komsomol organizations and by the superior political bodies.

The experience gained by the submarines in the war years contributed to the further development of theoretical and practical questions in the employment of submarines and made it possible to work out demands on the tactical specifications of their weapons and equipment. The ideas which arose in analyzing submarine combat operations during the war years were embodied in the modern nuclear submarines which comprise the core of the Soviet Navy.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Boyevalaya letopis Voenno-Morskogo Flota 1941-1942" [Combat Chronicle of the Navy 1941-1942], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, p 433.
2. TsvMA [Central Naval Archives], folio 216, file 12487, sheets 458-460.
3. Ibid., folio 10, file 17714, sheet 250.
4. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 4, 1975, p 123.
5. L. A. Yemelyanov, "Sovetskiye bodvodnyye lodki v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne" [Soviet Submarines in the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1981, p 102.
6. "Morskoy atlas" [Naval Atlas], Vol III, Military History Part II, Moscow, Izd-vo GSh VMF, 1963, sheets 21, 22, 27; L. A. Yemelyanov, op. cit., pp 38, 45, 72, 83.
7. TsvMA, folio 79, file 39824, sheets 230-235.
8. In the prewar years, they basically developed the firing of a single torpedo in daylight with the use of a periscope, as it was felt that the more torpedo attacks the greater the success.
9. TsvMA, folio 78, file 39080, sheets 44-48; folio 79, file 33581, sheets 22-29.

10. The attempt to realize the idea of launching group attacks with tactical coordination of the boats was undertaken in the Northern Fleet at the beginning of February 1943. For this the fleet command assigned the submarines K-3 (commander, Capt 3d Rank K. I. Malafeyev) and K-22 (commander, Capt 3d Rank V. F. Kulbakin). Prior to setting to sea the crews worked on combined cruising using the UZPN. However, a day after arriving on station, the underwater sound communication was interrupted and subsequently the submarines operated independently. The command concluded that due to the insufficient technical reliability of the instruments, the joint method of operations as tactical groups would not be extended.

Moreover, the short combined cruising also disclosed an essential shortcoming of the given tactical procedure, primarily the difficulty of controlling the maneuvers of the submarines. In maneuvering the attention of the submarine commanders was split between searching for the enemy and maintaining position in formation. The submarines also did not gain in the distance of target detection and in coming in for the attack interfered with one another. See: I. A. Kolyshkin, "V glubinakh polyarnykh morey" [In the Depths of the Arctic Seas], 2d Revised Edition, Moscow, Voenizdat, 1970, pp 228, 231.

11. TsVMA, folio 10, file 17714, sheets 340-345.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. L. A. Yemelyanov, op. cit., p 171.
15. TsVMA, folio 38, file 2286, sheet 70.
16. I. A. Kolyshkin, op. cit., pp 129-131.
17. TsVMA, folio 18, file 28176, sheet 2.
18. "Porazheniye germanskogo imperializma vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne" [The Defeat of German Imperialism in World War II], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1960, pp 118-138.

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AIR OPERATIONS AGAINST ENEMY RESERVES IN OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS OF GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, July 86 (signed to press 25 Jun 86) pp 22-28

[Article by Chief of the Air Forces Main Staff, Col Gen Avn V. Ye. Pankin]

[Text] The principles of organizing and conducting the fight against enemy reserves were worked out in the mid-1930's. According to the theory of an operation in depth, the mission of countering the reserves was to be entrusted to aviation. The air formations and units were to check the moving up of the reserves, to destroy them in the concentration areas as well as in the course of launching counterstrikes. It was felt that bomber aviation should prevent the approach of fresh enemy forces and impede their maneuvering and the planned delivery of ammunition and materiel by knocking out the lines of communications. The "Temporary Instructions on Independent Actions of the RKKA [Worker-Peasant Red Army] Air Forces" published in 1936 prescribed that independent air operations be carried out in the aim of stopping rail, motor vehicle, sea and river movements. The individual provisions of these instructions gained practical realization. In particular, in the air forces of the Special Western Military District and Northern Caucasus Military District, they studied the methods of bomber operations in attacking reserves, rail and highway communications in the front zone and in the immediate operational depth.(1)

However, the questions of planning, organizing and completely supporting air operations against enemy reserves were not worked out in detail and tested in the actual operational and combat training of the Air Forces. For this reason, from the very first days of the war against Nazi Germany, the Soviet Army Command was forced to seek out effective forms and methods of countering the enemy reserves. In the course of the war these continued to improve.

In instances when the scale of the Nazi troop regroupings assumed an operational-strategic scope, special air operations were conducted. Thus, on 3 August 1943, a counteroffensive of the Soviet troops commenced on the Belgorod-Kharkov sector. The troops of the Voronezh and Steppe Fronts split the enemy grouping and threatened its complete destruction. For restoring the situation, the Nazi Command began shifting 10 divisions into the Kharkov area from the other sectors of the Soviet-German Front. In the aims of weakening

these and preventing the planned move-up, upon a decision of Hq SHC [Headquarters Supreme High Command] from 4 through 12 August, an air operation was carried out involving the 8th, 17th, 5th and 2d Air Armies as well as a portion of the long-range aviation formations.

A particular feature of this operation was the successive commitment of the air armies to battle against the reserves. Formations of bombers and ground attack planes from the 8th Air Army of the Southern Front were the first to begin to attack around-the-clock the tank and motorized divisions which were moving up from the Donbass. Subsequently, as reserves were moved to the north, the air formations of the 17th Air Army of the Southwestern Front joined battle against them. Just on 4 and 5 August, pilots from these air armies destroyed 16 troop trains, and annihilated 28 tanks and more than 300 motor vehicles.(2) From 8 August, the 5th and 2d Air Armies of the Steppe and Voronezh Fronts began operations against the reserves. Their formations launched attacks chiefly against the tank and motorized columns on the highways. Simultaneously, the long-range bombers operated against the enemy and over a period of 8 nights they put out of commission a number of railroad junctions and stations and destroyed 28 trains carrying troops and freight. In the course of the air operation which lasted 9 days, the Soviet pilots made all in all over 7,100 aircraft sorties and caused significant losses to the Nazi troops. The chief result of it was that the German tank and motorized divisions were unable to concentrate promptly for joint operations in the areas of Akhtyrka and Bogodukhov. This significantly facilitated the task of the troops of the Voronezh Front in repelling their counterstrikes and finally defeating the enemy in these areas.

In the Belorussian Strategic Offensive Operation, as a result of the encirclement and defeat of large Nazi troop groupings at Vitebsk, Bobruysk and Minsk, in July 1944, a large breach was formed in the center of their front. In order to close this, the Nazi Command began to hurriedly shift major reserves there: two tank divisions from Army Group Northern Ukraine, a Hungarian cavalry division from Hungary, an infantry division from Poland, an infantry division and an infantry brigade from Germany, and an infantry division from Norway. Three infantry divisions from Army Group North were also moved there.

In the developing situation, the Soviet Command took the decision to conduct an air operation in the aim of disrupting the planned rail movements and impeding the moving up of enemy reserves in an area 700 km wide, from Daugavpils to Lwow. Eight long-range aviation [ADD] corps participated in this. From 4 through 12 July, the ADD pilots made more than 2,600 night aircraft sorties attacking railroad junctions, stations and sections. The strength of the groups, depending upon the importance of the objectives, varied from 10 to 100 bombers. Air operations were marked by rather high effectiveness. Thus, during the two nights of 7 and 8 July 1944, the terminal and steam locomotive depot were destroyed at the Brest rail junction, 9 steam locomotives were put out of commission, as well as the bridge across the Mukhovets River, 30 trains with equipment, ammunition and personnel were burned out, the staff of a division was destroyed as well as up to 3,000 Nazis.(3) As a result of the attacks made and the energetic operations by the partisans, the movement of enemy troops on the Belorussian railroads was

significantly disrupted, the reserves suffered great losses and arrived in the combat area very late and substantially weakened.

However, it was not possible to completely stop the Nazi rail movements in the course of the air operations for the following reasons: in the first place, the brief summer nights did not make it possible to hold the enemy rail lines under air raids for an extended time and during the day the damage was eliminated; secondly, the effectiveness of the raids in a number of instances was reduced due to the inexperience of the flight personnel recruits and shortcomings in organizing the illumination of the targets.

The organizing and planning of air operations to combat enemy reserves were carried out upon the instructions of the Supreme High Command of the Soviet Army. In its directives, Hq SHC defined the goal and plan of the air operation, it set the men and equipment to be involved and designated the dates and area of execution.

The immediate organizers of the air operations which were usually conducted by the forces of front and long-range aviation were the commander and staff of the Soviet Army Air Forces. In accord with the plan adopted by the Air Forces commander, the staff worked out the plans of the operations, issued combat missions to subordinates and organized cooperation and all-round support of the combat operations of the air field forces, formations and units. For example, the Deputy Commander of the Soviet Army Air Forces Gen F. Ya. Falaleyev, prior to conducting the air operation in August 1943, ordered the commanders of the 8th, 17th, 5th and 2d Air Armies and the long-range aviation: "From 4 August to operate against the rail and motor movements, to check the shifting of troops into the Kharkov area, to prevent the accumulation of enemy troops in Kharkov and the departure of them from there to the north. By operations against the rail junctions, stations, bridges and sections, by destroying the rail track, to plug up traffic. To fire on steam locomotives and to paralyze and prevent rail traffic. By ground attack and bomber strikes to destroy motor transport and motorized columns on roads."(4)

The combat operations of the air formations and units were planned in detail for each day of the operation. The plans of the air operations included a range of operational documents. In addition to the general operational part of the plan which was approved, as a rule, by the Supreme Commander-in-Chief or by his deputy, schedules of combat sorties were worked out along with plans for organizing cooperation and command, air reconnaissance, navigator, logistic and airfield support. The planning of Air Forces combat operations in the air operations had a multifaceted nature and was marked by careful elaboration of the planning documents in an extremely limited time.

The combating of the closest operational and tactical Nazi troop reserves in the zones of the fronts was carried out by the forces of the air armies in the form of daily combat operations. These were organized by the commanders and staffs of the air armies on the basis of the plans of the front commanders. The aim of these operations was to isolate the battle area from the influx of fresh enemy troops, to cause maximum damage to the latter and thereby check the counterattacks and counterstrikes being prepared against our troops as well as prevent the enemy from a planned retreat and to stop it from occupying

lines which had been prepared deep in the defenses. For example, in the course of the Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy Operation of 1944, in the aims of relieving its surrounded grouping, the enemy was preparing a counterstrike. For this it had created a powerful fist of eight tank and motorized divisions which were discovered by air reconnaissance in moving up in the area of Shpola. The air formations of the 5th Air Army immediately began to attack the enemy. During the period from 28 January through 11 February, Soviet pilots, regardless of the bad weather conditions, made around 1,400 aircraft sorties. As a result of the continuous air operations, the enemy divisions suffered high losses, their offensive might was substantially reduced and the attempt initiated by the Nazis on 11 February to break through to the surrounded grouping failed.(5)

The formations of the 16th Air Army of the First Belorussian Front operated equally successfully against the enemy reserves during the second stage of the Vistula-Oder Offensive Operation. After the Soviet troops had broken through the defenses, the Nazi leadership began to hurriedly shift additional forces to this area from the interior regions of Germany, from the Western Front and other sectors of the Soviet-German Front. As a result of the measures adopted by our command, the arriving reserves were able to be destroyed piecemeal. Thus, the Tank Corps Grosse Deutschland which was moved from East Prussia was detected by air scouts in unloading in the Lodz area. Attacked by aviation and the arriving tank armies, it was forced to retreat with losses, without being able to enter battle. This made it possible for the forward detachments and the tank corps of the front to reach the enemy rear defensive line of Ziclin, Lodz, Radomsko before the retreating units of the Nazi tank corps and to cross it without a pause.

Air reconnaissance also spotted the shifting of five infantry divisions to the Warta defensive line. Bombers and ground attack planes from the 16th Air Army in groups of up to 30 aircraft, under a fighter cover, destroyed the enemy reserves at the stations of Akawina, Sweszewice and in the Logovnikov area. As a result of the bombing raids, 12 trains with troops were set afire as well as over 200 vehicles, a steam locomotive depot and track were destroyed.(6) The enemy reserve divisions suffered enormous losses. The enemy plan of establishing a solid defensive front was checked with active air involvement.

The experience of the war showed that in the aim of successfully combating enemy reserves, it was essential to constantly have reliable data on the state and regrouping of enemy troops. Aviation was widely employed for obtaining this information, including special reconnaissance regiments (squadrons) and the non-T/O reconnaissance subunits of the other branches. Operational air reconnaissance was conducted to a depth of 200-350 km and tactical to 100 km.(7) This made it possible to detect the shifting and moving up (approach) of reserves, their strength, the axes of the counterstrikes being prepared; this provided substantial aid to the Soviet Command in assessing the situation and adopting sound plans for subsequent actions. As the troops advanced the depth of following the enemy and the intensity of air reconnaissance increased.

However, due to insufficiently accurate planning and organization of air reconnaissance and the complexity of the situation, it was not always possible

to promptly detect the regrouping of enemy troops or guess its plans. For example, the high command of the Southwestern Sector in May 1942 was unable to promptly detect the large groupings being organized by the Nazi leadership for launching a counterstrike. As a result the counterstrike was a surprise. Also undetected promptly was the concentrating of two enemy tank divisions ready to launch a counterstrike against the 38th Army at the start of the Iwów-Sandomierz Operation. As a consequence of this, the Nazi troops succeeded not only in halting the army offensive but also forcing its formations back 2-4 km. (8)

Cooperation between the formations of the air armies and the long-range aviation in combating enemy reserves was usually organized by zones. Attacks were made by heavy bombers against targets located at a distance of 200-300 km and more from the front line while frontal aviation did the same in the front zone (up to 150-200 km from the forward edge). The nature of the targets was the most diverse: aerial (railroad junctions and stations, accumulations of troops and combat equipment at railheads and crossing areas), linear (trains on stretches of track, tank, motorized and motor vehicle columns, crossings), small-sized (steam locomotives, tank cars, individual motor vehicles and so forth).

During the first and second periods of the Great Patriotic War, bombers operated against aerial targets in groups of varying strength at a designated time or when called in from a status of airfield alert. This provided constant action against the enemy. For example, in the course of the Kursk counteroffensive in 1943, as a result of the continuous wave operations by assault groups numbering from 3 to 9 aircraft against the railroad junctions of Bryansk, Orel, Karachev, Gomel, Unecha, Roslavl, Gelgorod, Kharkov, Poltava, Krasnograd and others, the enemy was actually deprived of the possibility of shifting troops and combat equipment to the front line. Attacks were made against accumulations of trains from altitudes of from 800 to 3,000-500 m, depending upon the degree of resistance of the air defenses of the objectives. Aiming and bombing were carried out from level flight by each crew independently. In the concluding operations of the Great Patriotic War, along with wave operations, concentrated attacks began to be widely employed. Indicative in this regard were the actions of formations of the 2d Air Army (First Ukrainian Front) in the interests of the 3d and 4th Guards Tank Armies in the Berlin Operation in April 1945. The German Command was endeavoring to prevent the exploiting of their advance by committing reserves (three tank divisions and one motorized infantry division) to battle. The moving up and concentrating of the enemy forces were detected by air reconnaissance on the third line of enemy defenses. A group of 150 bombers made concentrated strikes against the strongpoints of Cottbus, Neuhausen, Gross Osnig, Spremberg and as a result of these the Nazi divisions suffered high losses. Their commitment to battle was disorganized. Our tank armies broke through the enemy third defensive line and began a rapid push to Berlin.

Changes also occurred in the tactics of bomber operations against linear targets. At the start of the war, the bombers operated against them predominantly in regimental groups consisting of 9 aircraft in a "V"-formation from an altitude of 2,000-3,000 m. However, bomb strikes from medium altitudes against tank and motorized columns from such formations were not

marked by great effectiveness. Moreover, due to the poor fighter cover and the rather strong resistance of the enemy air defenses, the bombers suffered high losses. For this reason, subsequently, they switched to operations from altitudes of 600-1,000 m in groups of 3-5 aircraft moving in a "column of individual aircraft" formation. Attacks against enemy troops began to be made by the pilots at the points of their dismounting, in crossing areas, on forest and country roads, using antitank, high-explosive and fragmentation bombs and incendiary mixes as weapons. This was immediately felt in their effectiveness.

The combating of small mobile targets was carried out by their search and destruction in a set area or zone ("lone-wolf" operation). Usually small groups and even individual crews were involved in carrying out these missions. The long-range aviation usually employed this method under nighttime conditions.

In the aim of increasing the effectiveness of the attacks, upon the orders of Hq SHC of 4 May 1943, each air army was ordered to have one ground attack air regiment and one fighter regiment which would be specialized in destroying small mobile objects.

In the course of the fighting, the tactical procedures for crossing air defenses were constantly improved. The battle formations began to include, in addition to the attack ones, feint groups and air defense neutralization groups. For breaking up the fire of the enemy anti-aircraft weapons, the attack groups approached the objectives from different directions and at night for achieving surprise the bombers approached the targets in a glide with their engines silenced.

Thus, combat experience of the Soviet Air Forces in defeating reserves and disrupting enemy communications shows that these were carried out on major axes in the interests of strategic (front) operations, they were a component part of them and were characterized by great scope and decisiveness in achieving the set aims. Air operations contributed to the rapid defeat of large Wehrmacht groupings and created conditions for developing a rapid offensive by the Soviet troops to a great depth. High effectiveness of combating reserves was achieved by launching continuous attacks against the lines of communications, by the skillful choice of the forms and methods of combat and the weapons employed, by a constant improvement in tactical procedures, and by careful organization of air reconnaissance and cooperation of the air field forces, formations and units.

An analysis of air combat against reserves indicates that substantial results in countering the regrouping of enemy forces could be achieved only in those instances when the attacks on the lines of communications were carried out in the entire zone of maneuver and to a great depth. The launching of attacks against railroad facilities a short distance from the front line did not ensure the checking of the maneuver and the regrouping of the troops as rail movements could easily be compensated for by motor vehicle ones.

The second and third periods of the Great Patriotic War are characterized by a significantly wider scale of employing aviation in combating enemy troops.

reserves and their regroupings. While in the first period the frontal aviation, in carrying out this mission, made around 23,000 aircraft sorties, in the second and third periods, the figure was, respectively, over 38,000 and 39,000. As a total during the war years, the frontal and long-range aviation made 168,000 aircraft sorties for combating enemy reserves and operational movements, and this was 5.4 percent of their total number.(9)

Undoubtedly, such a percentage of aircraft sorties cannot be considered very high. However, the given data show the constant increase in the aviation forces involved in combating enemy reserves and disrupting lines of communications without harming the carrying out of such major missions as winning (retaining) air supremacy, air support for the troops in the operations and so forth. As a result of the energetic actions by the air formations, enemy movements were significantly disrupted (Belorussian Operation), the enemy troops suffered high losses in the dismounting areas (Vistula-Oder Operation and others) and on the approaches to the battlefield (Korsun-Shevchenkovskiy, Iwów-Sandomierz, Berlin Operations) and this sharply reduced the offensive might of their counterstrike groupings.

The operational art of the Air Forces during the years of the Great Patriotic War was enriched by the invaluable experience of organizing and conducting the fight against enemy reserves and operational movements. Here the forms and methods of combat for the aviation field forces, formations and units were confirmed, effective tactical procedures for attacking various targets were worked out, optimum battle formations were set, and the most effective weapons were discovered. Much of this experience has not lost its importance today. Under present-day conditions, when the scale of armed combat may assume unprecedented scope and when all types of the means of transport are developing rapidly, particularly air and sea which are capable of moving large troop contingents over great distances in short period of time, this problem assumes even greater urgency. The Air Forces at present remain one of the main means assigned to carry out the tasks of combating the reserves, disrupting land, sea and air lines of communications and sealing off combat areas in the aim of interdicting the approach of fresh enemy forces.

FOOTNOTES

1. TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 35, inv. 11285, file 360, sheet 364.
2. I. V. Timokhovitch, "Operativnoye iskusstvo sovetskikh VVS v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne" [Operational Art of the Soviet Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1976, p 256.
3. A. D. Tsykin, "Ot 'Ili Muromtsa' do raketonostsa" [From "Ilya Muromets" to the Missile Carrier], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1975, p 107.
4. TsAMO, folio 370, inv. 6518, file 88, sheet 1.
5. "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945" [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic

War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol III, 1958, pp 117-118;
I. V. Timokhovich, op. cit., pp 173-174.

6. "Sovetskiye Voenno-Vozdushnyye Sily v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945 gg." [Soviet Air Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, p 379.
7. I. V. Timokhovich, op. cit., pp 123-124.
8. VOENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 4, 1984, p 25.
9. "Sovetskiye Voenno-Vozdushnyye...", p 443.

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CHOOSING SECTORS OF THE MAIN THRUST IN CAMPAIGNS AND STRATEGIC OPERATIONS

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[Article by Maj Gen P. T. Kunitskiy; the article was written from the experience of the Great Patriotic War]

[Text] In the practical activities of the Soviet Command to organize offensive actions in the course of previous wars, one of the central places was held by choosing the sector of the main thrust.(*). "The entire art of command and policy," said V. I. Lenin in 1920, "is to promptly consider and know where one's main forces and attention are to be concentrated."(1)

This task was carried out with great art during the years of the Civil War. The enemy, in possessing superiority in men and weapons, was besieging the young Soviet republic from all sides and was pushing toward the country's vital centers. At the same time the limited nature of the human and material capabilities did not make it possible for the Red Army to conduct extensive offensive operations with equal intensity and with decisive aims on several fronts. For this reason of the numerous fronts at that time the main, decisive one was isolated. Here they considered the aggregate of interrelated and interdetermined factors: political, military and moral. The choice of the main front was also organically tied to the resolving of economic problems, since the struggle was carried out for the main sources of raw material, grain and fuel, without which the nation could not exist.

Depending upon the military-political situation, the role and importance of the individual fronts changed. Thus, in the summer and the first half of the autumn of 1918, of the then existing Eastern, Southern, Caspian-Caucasian and Northern Fronts and the Western Defensive Area, the Eastern Front was recognized as the main front of the republic. At the end of 1918, the Southern Front became the main front of the republic, and in the spring of 1919 again the Eastern Front, and in mid-summer 1919, again the Southern. "The attempt of world imperialism to suppress us militarily," wrote V. I. Lenin, "has undergone a complete defeat!... We should firmly remember that the source of the successes and miracles which we have shown in military affairs has been that we have always focused on the main and basic thing...."(2)

During the years of the Great Patriotic War, Soviet military art was enriched in the experience of choosing the sector of the main thrust. In skillfully resolving this question, the Soviet Command, without having at times overall supremacy in men and weapons over the enemy, achieved major successes in armed combat. A study of the acquired experience is of great practical and theoretical interest. Of the entire vast problem of choosing the sector of the main thrust, we will take up only certain aspects of it.

First of all, let us point out that the sector for launching the main thrust was the chief element in the plans for preparing and conducting military operations. For this reason, the correct choice of the sector on which the main efforts would be better concentrated comprised a most important problem, with the creative activities of all levels of commanders and staffs aimed at carrying this out. Here there was no room for error, as the success of the campaigns and operations depended upon the results of the offensive by the main groupings.

The choice of the sector of the main thrust was not only a responsible task but also an exceptionally complicated and labor-intensive process. In organizing an offensive, sufficiently complete and reliable data did not always exist concerning the enemy, its forces, means and plans. In widely employing disinformation, the enemy endeavored to depict the actual as false and the false as actual. Difficulties were also caused by the absence of analogs of the war, for each new situation was unlike the previous one.

No matter how complicated military actions were, they were subordinate to the objective laws of armed combat and for this reason they were understandable.

The Marxist-Leninist methodology of analyzing military actions, the Leninist principles of leadership and the principles of Soviet military art comprise the scientific basis for choosing the sector of the main thrust. In relying on this base, the Soviet Command was able to delve deeply into the essence of military actions and in a majority of instances correctly choose the sector of the main thrust. The thoroughness of research, and the analysis and consideration of political, economic and specifically military factors also contributed to the resolving of the problem.

Each period of the war, each campaign and strategic operation had its particular features and was marked by an uniqueness of the situation. For this reason the measures carried out to choose the sector of the main thrust were also marked by diversity.

The choice of the sector of the main thrust in offensive campaigns was made by the superior military-political leadership. At the joint sessions of the Politburo GKO [State Defense Committee] and Hq SHC, considering the overall aim of the campaign, the sector was set on which the defeat of the main enemy grouping could have a decisive impact on the course of armed combat and would make it possible to achieve major political, economic and strategic results.

The conditions under which the USSR Armed Forces entered the war were so complex and the consequences of the first massed attacks by the Wehrmacht were so severe that neither the courageous resistance or the individual successful

counterstrikes of the Soviet troops could at that time alter the overall course of military actions in their favor. Something else was required in military art. This was the choice of the most dangerous sector on the entire Soviet-German Front and the going over to a decisive counteroffensive on it. The experience of the war completely confirmed the correctness of this line.

The overall situation existing on the Soviet-German Front late in the autumn of 1941 urgently required energetic actions by the Soviet troops on three main strategic sectors: in the north at Tikhvin, for helping besieged Leningrad; in the center on the Moscow sector; in the south on the Rostov sector. All three sectors were very important and each of them was of strategic significance. However, with an even distribution of the available strategic reserves over these sectors, neither of them could achieve sufficiently decisive strategic results.

In analyzing the enemy, Hq SHC endeavored primarily to discover its plans and determine the strength, capabilities and main sector of actions. By the end of September, the enemy was 300 km from Moscow, near the walls of blockaded Leningrad, it had created a threat to the Kharkov industrial area and the Donbass, while in October it had broken into the Crimea and besieged Sevastopol. Although the Wehrmacht forces had succeeded in achieving a major strategic success, their strike power had been seriously weakened.

The autumn which had set in forced the Nazi Command to hurry to achieve the aims set in the Barbarossa Plan before the rains and colds. The Nazis felt that by the capturing of Moscow, the triumph of the strategy of a blitzkrieg and the strength of German weapons would be demonstrated to the entire world. With the capturing of Moscow they planned to determine the outcome of the war in their favor.

For carrying out their aim, the strength of Army Group Center included 1.8 million men, over 14,000 guns and mortars and 1,700 tanks. This was 42 percent of the personnel, 33 percent of the artillery and 75 percent of the tanks out of the total number of those fighting on the Soviet-German Front. Around 1,390 aircraft had been assigned for supporting the ground troops.(3)

On the basis of assessing possible enemy operations, Hq SHC for the 1941-1942 winter campaign established the Moscow sector as the main one and planned to conduct a counteroffensive here in the aim of wresting the strategic initiative from the hands of the enemy and defeating its assault groupings.

The foresight of the Soviet Command was completely vindicated. In going over to a counteroffensive at Moscow at the beginning of December and then a general offensive, the Soviet Army achieved a victory which was of enormous military-political and international significance. Army Group Center aimed at capturing Moscow was thrown back some 150-400 km. Some 16 enemy divisions and one brigade were put out of action. From 1 January through 30 March 1942, enemy losses in personnel were over 333,000 men.(4)

The successes of the Soviet troops in the 1941-1942 winter campaign showed the might of the Soviet state and its army. The hopes of the Nazis of the fragility of the Soviet social and state system and the Soviet rear collapsed.

The victory of the Soviet Armed Forces at Moscow, where the enemy was still superior to our troops in personnel and weapons, "dispelled the myth of the invincibility of the Nazi Wehrmacht and finally buried the plan for a 'blitzkrieg'. Strategic initiative for the first time since the start of the war had been seized from the aggressor."(5)

However, in the summer of 1942, Nazi Germany made use of the lack of a second front in Europe and, having shifted new forces from the West to the Soviet-German Front, initiated an offensive on the southern wing of the Soviet-German Front and recovered the strategic initiative. A particularly threatening situation developed in the Stalingrad area. The enemy was pushing at any price toward the Volga. Hitler and his henchmen were hoping that as soon as the German troops were successful in the south of our country, they would be able to attack on other strategic sectors and resume the offensive against Leningrad and Moscow.

The Soviet political and military leadership correctly determined the importance of Stalingrad and the Stalingrad sector as a whole. Here was a center of communications connecting the central regions of the nation with the Caucasus and through here ran the main artery over which Baku oil was transported essential for military needs and the national economy. In addition, having captured Stalingrad, the enemy would cut off Moscow from the Volga and Urals rear and be able to attack Moscow from the east. For this reason it was essential to prevent the Nazis from capturing Stalingrad and breaking through to the Volga at any price.

In correctly assessing the developing situation on the Soviet-German Front which had reached almost 6,200 km, the maximum length over the entire war, the party Central Committee, the GKO and Hq SHC determined the Stalingrad sector as the main one in the 1942-1943 winter campaign and organized a counteroffensive here in the aim of dealing the enemy a defeat which would sharply alter the strategic situation not only in the south of the nation but along the entire Soviet-German Front.

In choosing the Stalingrad sector as the main one, the Soviet Command proceeded from the following considerations. First of all it considered the crisis which had occurred for the enemy: its defensive capabilities had been depleted and reserves expended while the arrival of new ones was not expected in the immediate future. According to the assessment of the General Staff, the resources which Nazi Germany possessed by the autumn of 1942 were not sufficient for completing the tasks either in the Northern Caucasus or in the area of the Don and Volga. It was felt that with the defeat of the enemy troops in the Stalingrad area the enemy's situation would deteriorate in the Northern Caucasus. This would force it to retreat hurriedly or fight under encirclement conditions.

The scientifically based forecast proved completely correct. As a result of the counteroffensive at Stalingrad, the Soviet troops defeated the 6th German Army and the 4th German Tank Army, the 3d and 4th Romanian Armies and the 8th Italian Army which lost over 800,000 men, up to 2,000 tanks and assault guns, over 10,000 guns and mortars and around 3,000 combat and transport aircraft.

The Wehrmacht was completely deprived of 32 divisions and 3 brigades while 16 of its divisions had suffered a major defeat. (6)

The victory won on the banks of the Volga "marked the beginning to a fundamental turning point in the course of the Great Patriotic War and all World War II." (7) The Soviet Army began to liberate the temporarily occupied regions initially in the south and then on other sectors. From Stalingrad and the Caucasus foothills the war turned to the west, from whence it had come.

In order to improve the morale of the army and the people, to prevent a break-up of the Nazi bloc and restore Germany's military and political prestige, the Nazi politicians and strategists in the summer of 1943 decided to conduct a major offensive on the Soviet-German Front, to recover strategic initiative and change the course of the war in their favor. The Nazi Command concluded that the most convenient area for launching a decisive attack was the salient in the Kursk area which was known as the Kursk arc. The enemy planned to cut off the salient at its base and defeat the formations of the Central and Voronezh Fronts which were fighting there.

The enemy prepared carefully for the operation which was code named Citadel. A large troop grouping was established consisting of 50 divisions (including 16 tank and motorized ones) and other units. The enemy had concentrated on the Kursk sector a total of over 900,000 soldiers and officers, up to 10,000 guns and mortars, up to 2,700 tanks and assault guns and over 2,000 aircraft. (8) The planned offensive was viewed as a major political and military action. The former chief of staff of the XLVIII Tank Corps which participated in the operation, Gen F. Mellenthin, commented that "no operation was so carefully prepared for as this was." "The victory at Kursk," commented the former commander of Army Group South, E. Manstein, "was to compensate for all our defeats in the past."

The Soviet Command, receiving information on the enemy offensive being prepared on the Kursk sector and having thoroughly assessed the developing situation, set the southwestern sector as the main one for the 1943 summer-autumn campaign. In its assessment, the defeat of the enemy armies in the areas of Orel and Kharkov and on the Kursk Salient would establish good conditions for developing an offensive in the aim of liberating the Left-Bank Ukraine and Donbass thereby partially resolving the food and fuel problems.

Having worn down the enemy assault groupings by a deliberate defense, the Soviet troops went over to a powerful counteroffensive in the course of which the Nazis suffered a major defeat. In the Kursk Battle, 30 enemy divisions were defeated and the Wehrmacht lost around 500,000 soldiers and officers, 1,500 tanks, over 3,700 aircraft. "The last engagement for the victory of Germany," as the Nazis themselves called the Battle of Kursk, ended in a complete defeat.

After the Kursk Battle, Germany and its allies were forced to go over to the offensive along the entire Soviet-German Front. "As a result of the victory on the Kursk Salient and the reaching of the Dnieper by the Soviet troops, a fundamental turning point was reached in the war. The enemy suffered losses

from which it could no longer recover. The Soviet Armed Forces had seized the strategic initiative and kept it constantly until the war's end.(9)

Having reinforced the results of the fundamental turning point, the Soviet Armed Forces during the campaigns of 1944-1945, initiated combat in the aim of completely expelling the Nazi invaders from Soviet territory, completing the defeat of the Nazi troops, providing aid to the European peoples in liberating themselves from the Nazi yoke and achieving a complete victory in the war (Diagram 1). These overall military-political aims of the war underlay the choice of the sector of the main thrusts during the campaigns of the third period.

For example, the main thrust in the 1944 winter campaign was planned by Hq SHC on the southwestern sector in the aim of defeating the major enemy grouping (Army Groups South and A), liberating important industrial and agricultural areas on the Right-Bank Ukraine and reaching the frontiers of Romania and the Carpathians. The achieving of these goals would ensure a further strengthening of the Soviet economy and at the same time would worsen the economic position of Germany and would lead to a deepening of the crisis in the Nazi camp. The enemy's strategic front was split into two parts and cooperation was disrupted between its groupings fighting to the north and south of the Carpathians. The choice of the sector of the main thrust here was also determined by the advantageous balance of forces for us as this made it possible in a limited time to establish strong assault groupings for carrying out new offensive operations. Simultaneously with the launching of the main thrust on the Right-Bank Ukraine, attacks were also planned at Stalingrad and in the Crimea.

The idea of the successive launching of attacks on different sectors lay at the basis of the plan for the 1944 summer-autumn campaign. This subsequently was to develop into an overall strategic offensive along the entire Soviet-German Front. At the same time, having thoroughly assessed the situation, Hq SHC considered the western sector to be the most advantageous for launching the main thrust during the first stage of the campaign. This was determined primarily by the desire to liberate Belorussia, the western oblasts of the Ukraine and the southern regions of the Baltic, to begin the liberation of Poland, and to reach the frontiers of East Prussia and the Vistula by the shortest route from whence new prospects would be opened up for conducting major operations on the Warsaw-Berlin sector.

The successful advance of our troops into Belorussia disrupted the stability of the enemy's entire strategic front and created good conditions for launching powerful strikes in the Baltic and Balkans. In particular, the launching of an attack on the southern wing of the Soviet-German Front during the second stage of the campaign made it possible to put the German allies of Romania and Hungary out of the war, to obtain the possibility of liberating Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, as well as provide direct help to the Yugoslav peoples in their struggle against the Nazi invaders.

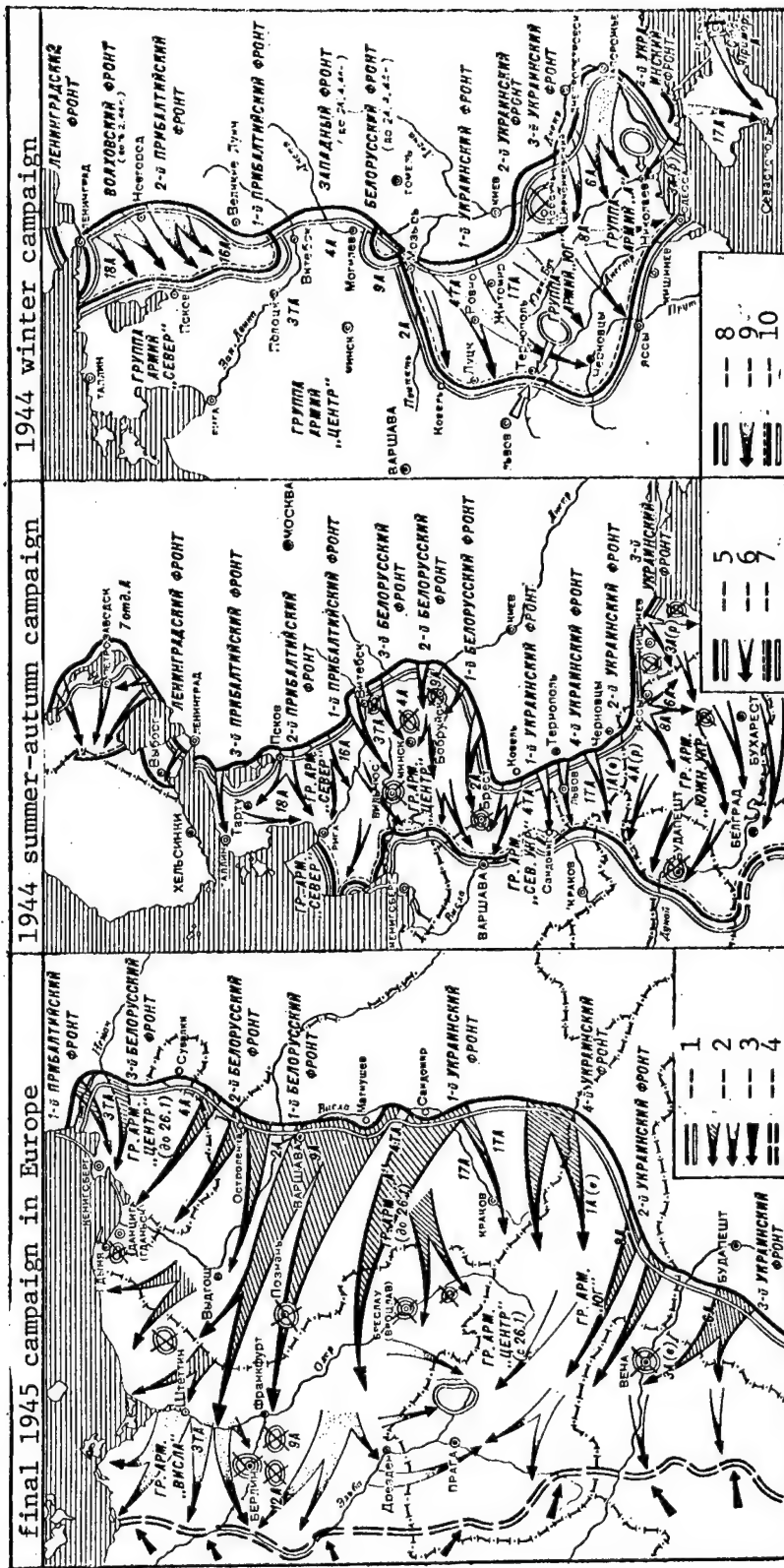


Diagram 1. Axes of Attacks by Soviet Troops in Campaigns of 1944 and 1945

In the final campaign of 1945 in Europe, the intention of Hq SHC was to launch a powerful attack against the enemy and conclude the war victoriously. The aims of the campaign were to be achieved by the simultaneous going over to the offensive on all the strategic sectors with the subsequent development of it in depth and the capture of Berlin. The main thrust would be made on the western (Warsaw-Berlin) axis.

The choice of this sector as the main one was determined primarily by political consideration. Here ran the shortest routes to Berlin the capture of which by Soviet troops was of important significance for the rapid conclusion of the war and a resolution of the questions of a postwar settlement for the nations of Central and Southeastern Europe. A major enemy grouping was to be defeated and this should force the Nazi Command to shift significant forces from other sectors of the Soviet-German Front to cover its capital. This, in turn, would create good conditions for launching powerful attacks on the other strategic sectors.

The choice of the sector of the main thrust in the strategic offensive operations, as in the campaigns, was characterized by great creative work. "In working out the next operation," wrote MSU G. K. Zhukov, "I. V. Stalin usually called in the chief of the General Staff and his deputy and together with them carefully examined the operational-strategic situation on the entire Soviet-German Front, including: the condition of the troops of the fronts, the data of all types of intelligence and the course of the training of reserves from all branches of troops."(10)

The operational-strategic capabilities of our troops were also studied and discussed with great carefulness. Calculations were made and variations for increasing the strength of the attack were thought out. Summoned to Headquarters were the chief of the Red Army Rear Services, the commanders of the various branches of troops and the chiefs of the main directorates of the People's Commissariat of Defense which were to actually carry out the given operation.

In assessing the enemy, particular importance was given to correctly determining its main grouping the defeat of which would ensure the aim of the offensive; to ascertaining which enemy had to be defeated first and which sector of the thrust was the most advantageous for this. Along with this possible variations of enemy actions were analyzed, the strength, position and state of its reserves were particularly closely scrutinized and the time of their readiness and the sectors of the possible attacks were determined.

The choice of the sector of the main thrust was preceded by careful work on the part of representatives of Hq SHC and the commanders of the fronts in the field. A particularly constructive example would be the study of the terrain in preparations for the 1944 Belorussian Operation. MSU K. K. Rokossovskiy has written: "The compiling of the plan was preceded by extensive work in the field, particularly on the forward edge. We literally had to crawl on our bellies...."(11)

The terrain was judged from the viewpoint of selecting the sector of the main thrust which would possess the required operational capacity and make it

possible to successfully employ all the Armed Services and branches of troops, particularly large masses of tanks, and would ensure the covert concentration and deployment of them in the forming-up areas as well as convenience of cooperation and maneuver between them in the course of the offensive. The best sectors of the main thrust were considered to be those which would bring the assault groupings of the advancing troops out into the flanks and rear of the main opposing forces. Here the main thrust was most often considered best made against the most vulnerable and weakest points in the enemy defenses. These were usually those areas and sectors where there was no deep configuration of enemy defenses, high densities of men and weapons, major reserves and a developed system of engineer facilities, as well as sectors defended by poorly trained, exhausted or morale-weakened troops. The weakly covered boundaries and flanks were also, as a rule, vulnerable.

In a number of instances, when there was not enough time for the regrouping of troops or when the offensive started from captured bridgeheads on major water obstacles, it was permitted to launch the main thrust on a sector which was defended by a strong enemy grouping. Here the success of the offensive was ensured by a sufficient amount of powerful weapons (artillery, aviation) and forces for rapidly exploiting the success in depth (tank and mechanized troops).

The choice of the sector of the main thrust was organically tied to the methods of defeating the enemy, primarily those such as the surrounding of major enemy groupings with their subsequent destruction, the splitting or breaking up of the enemy strategic front and the destruction of the isolated groupings piecemeal. In many strategic operations these methods were combined.

In preparing the Stalingrad Offensive Operation, Hq SHC and the General Staff on the basis of the data from the fronts, determined the strong and weak aspects of the enemy grouping on this sector. The most battleworthy 6th Army and 4th Tank Army in the Wehrmacht, in being drawn into exhaustive fighting in the Stalingrad area, were unable to complete the operation of capturing the city and bogged down there. The troops of Germany's satellites which occupied the defenses on the flanks, in comparison with the German troops, were most poorly armed, less experienced and not sufficiently battleworthy. But most importantly, their soldiers and even many officers did not want to die for interests alien to them. The configuration of the front also favored the launching of flanking strikes. Our troops held an enveloping position relative to the enemy grouping.

In line with the developing situation, a decision was taken to launch the attacks against the weakest and most vulnerable places in the operational configuration of the enemy troops: against the flanks which were defended by the 3d and 4th Romanian Armies. This ensured the successful breakthrough of their defenses and the success of the operation as a whole. On 23 November, the Southwestern and Stalingrad Front, in advancing along pincer axes, respectively, from the areas of Serafimovich and Kletskaya and the Sarpin Lakes, linked up in the Kalach area (Sovetskiy Farm) and thereby closed the ring of encirclement in which were trapped 22 enemy divisions and over 160 separate units totaling 330,000 men.

An example of the skillful choice of the sectors of main thrusts in the aim of surrounding enemy troops was the Iasi-Kishinev Offensive Operation. In planning it, Hq SHC proceeded from the view that the encirclement and destruction of the enemy grouping defending on the Iasi-Kishinev Salient were favored by our quantitative and qualitative superiority in men and weapons as well as by the outflanking position of the troops of the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts in relation to the main forces of Army Group Southern Ukraine. In accord with the plan (the Directive of Hq SHC of 2 August 1944), the Second Ukrainian Front was to launch the main thrust against the most vulnerable point of the enemy defenses, the boundary between the 4th Romanian Army and the 8th German Army, where less battleworthy troops were on the defensive and there were no permanent fire emplacements. This sector was also convenient in the fact that it led by the shortest route to the crossings over the Prut River and into the rear of the 6th German Army. The Third Ukrainian Front was to launch its main thrust also against the boundary of the Nazi and Romanian troops in the aim of a deep envelopment of the defending enemy grouping from the south. The enemy did not expect an offensive by our troops here and its tactical defensive zone in a number of areas consisted of a single line. The attack from the bridgehead excluded the necessity of crossing the Dniester and this simplified the organization of the breakthrough.

The correct choice of the sectors of the main thrusts in the Iasi-Kishinev Operation determined its significant results. In attacking from the north and from the east, the fronts breached the enemy defenses on the selected sectors and, in advancing along pincer axes, surrounded and destroyed the main forces of Army Group Southern Ukraine and then rapidly developed an offensive into the interior of Romania. In the course of the operation, 22 German divisions were defeated as well as virtually all the Romanian ones on the front.

In those instances when the encirclement of the enemy was impossible, the main thrust was launched on a sector which ensured the splitting of the enemy grouping and its piecemeal defeat. For example, in the Belgorod-Kharkov Offensive Operation, the plan of Hq SHC envisaged the launching of the main thrust by the adjacent wings of the Voronezh and Steppe Fronts in the aim of splitting the enemy 4th Tank Army and the Operational Group Kampf, the cutting of their routes of retreat and their destruction piecemeal. The sector of the main thrust was chosen between the Belgorod and Tomarovka enemy centers of resistance and this ensured better conditions for breaching the tactical enemy defensive zone and for developing the offensive in depth. For assisting the troops of the main grouping, attacks were also planned on the central sector of the Voronezh Front and on the right wing of the Southwestern Front.

In launching a strong splitting main thrust as well as other attacks against the enemy Belgorod-Kharkov grouping, our troops over a period of 20 days of advance covered up to 140 km on the southern and southwestern sectors, having widened the front of advance up to 300 km, they had defeated 15 enemy divisions (including 4 tank), they had captured Kharkov and created conditions for liberating the Left-Bank Ukraine. (12)

An instructive example of the launching of a splitting main thrust is the Lwow-Sandomierz Operation which was conducted by the forces of one front (First Ukrainian). By launching the main thrust in this operation on the Lwow sector, it was possible to split Army Group Northern Ukraine into two parts: the 1st Hungarian Army and a portion of the 1st Tank Army were pushed back into the Carpathian foothills and the remaining forces beyond the Vistula. Along with the main thrust on the Lwow sector, it was planned to launch a second attack on the Rava-Russkaya and then an attack on the Stanislaw sector which should impede the enemy's utilization of operational reserves and the maneuvering of men and weapons along the front. All of this made it possible in the operation to achieve major results. The front's troops defeated 32 enemy divisions and destroyed 8 enemy divisions, they liberated the western oblasts of the Ukraine and the southeastern areas of Poland and they captured and reinforced a major bridgehead on the western bank of the Vistula which was to be of great importance for the subsequent advance on the Silesian axis. (13)

The plan for conducting the Vistula-Oder Offensive Operation envisaged the crushing of the enemy grouping by two powerful attacks. As a result of the developing situation, it was best to have the troops of the First Belorussian and First Ukrainian Front go over to the offensive from the bridgeheads on the Vistula and this meant the launching of attacks against strongpoints of the enemy defenses. At the same time, with the decisive massing of men and weapons from the fronts on the sectors of the main thrusts, this made it possible to shatter the enemy defenses on several sectors, to split the main forces of Army Group "A" (from 26 January 1945, Army Group Center) and destroy them piecemeal. Having thoroughly assessed the situation, Hq SHC demanded that the fronts launch attacks with the main forces as follows: the First Belorussian Front from the Magnuszew bridgehead on the Lodz axis and the First Ukrainian Front from the Sandomierz bridgehead on the Czestochowa axis. In addition, the fronts received the mission of launching auxiliary attacks. It was assumed that subsequently the deep splitting attacks of the fronts would merge into a general offensive of our troops on the Poznan and Breslau axes.

The results of the operation were impressive. The Soviet troops dealt a major defeat to Army Group Center (25 enemy divisions were crushed and 35 completely destroyed), they advanced some 500 km to the west, with the participation of the 1st Army of the Polish troops and Polish partisans they liberated the western and southern regions of Poland, including the capital of Warsaw, and reached the territory of Nazi Germany, having captured a bridgehead on the western bank of the Oder. (14)

An example of a skillful combination of various methods for defeating the enemy was the Belorussian Offensive Operation. The plan of Hq SHC envisaged the simultaneous breaching of enemy defenses in six sectors, the surrounding and destruction of the strongest flank enemy groupings in the area of Vitebsk and Bobruysk and the development of a pincer offensive on Minsk in the aim of encircling and defeating the main forces of Army Group Center (Diagram 2). Subsequently, in increasing the attack and widening the front of advance, the Soviet troops were to reach the western frontier of the USSR.

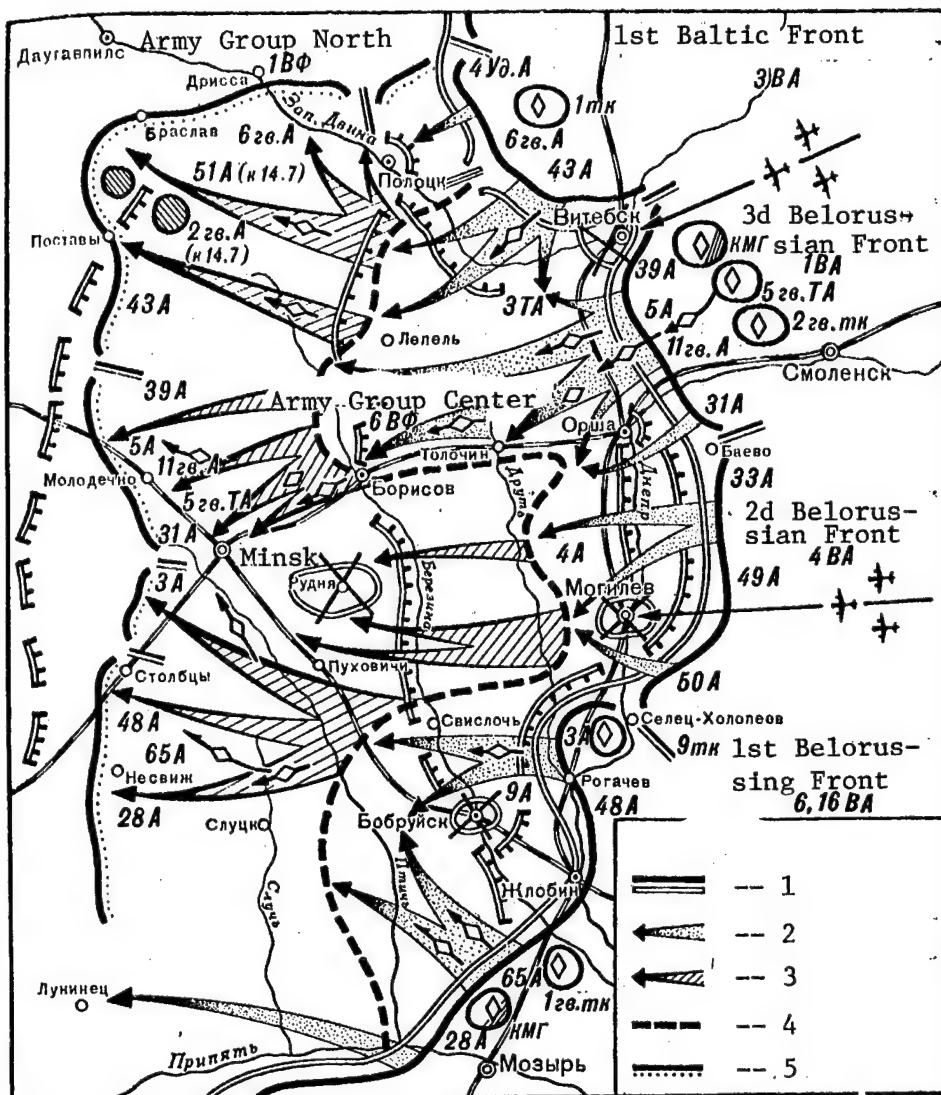


Diagram 2. Axes of Attack by Soviet Troops
in the Course of the First Stage of the Belorussian Operation
(23 June - 4 July 1944)

Key: 1--Front line by end of 22 June
2--Axes of attacks by Soviet troops on 23-28 June
3--Axes of Soviet troop attacks on 29 June-4 July
4--Position of Soviet troops by end of 28 June
5--Position of Soviet troops by end of 4 July

In accord with the plan, initially the troops of the adjacent wings of the First Baltic and Third Belorussian Fronts were ordered to launch flank attacks against the Vitebsk enemy grouping in order to surround and destroy it, while the First Belorussian Front was to launch two pincer attacks for encircling and defeating the Bobruysk enemy grouping. At the same time, the troops on the left wing of the Third Belorussian Front and the center of the Second Belorussian Front were to launch attacks on Orsha and Mogilev. The originality of choosing the sector of the main thrusts was that the defeat of the Vitebsk and Bobruysk enemy groupings would throw the gates wide open for the Soviet troops. Enormous masses of mobile troops should break through them deep into Belorussian territory.

The skillfully selected axes of the main thrusts ensured high results of an operation. Army Group Center suffered a stunning defeat, its 17 divisions and 3 brigades were destroyed and 50 divisions lost over half their personnel. Belorussia and a part of Lithuania were liberated and good conditions were established for launching attacks against enemy groups in the Baltic, East Prussia and Poland.

The choice of the sector of the main thrust was made in strictest secrecy. For example, even the commanders of the fronts did not know initially of the counterthrust being planned at Stalingrad by Hq SHC. In his memoirs, G. K. Zhukov wrote: "Since the Supreme Commander-in-Chief warned me to keep the plan for the major counteroffensive strictly secret, the discussion was chiefly about reinforcing the troops of the Southeastern and Stalingrad Fronts. To the question of A. I. Yeremenko about the plan for a stronger counterstrike, I, without refusing to reply, said that Headquarters in the future would carry out counterstrikes of significantly greater strength, but for now there was neither the men nor the weapons for such a plan."(15)

A special directive from the General Staff determined the measures which would exclude the leaking of information on the scale of the counteroffensive, its time, the sector of the main thrusts or the methods of action. In particular, correspondence and telephone calls related to the forthcoming counteroffensive were categorically prohibited; orders were issued only orally and only to immediate executors; the concentration of troops from the reserve of Hq SHC and the regrouping of troops within the fronts were carried out solely at night.

The experience of the war in terms of choosing the axis of the main thrust in offensive campaigns and strategic operations has been extremely diverse. In turning to this, it is not enough to know the historical events, but it is also essential to profoundly analyze the method of approaching the solution to this complex problem under various situational conditions. In studying the experience, it is very important to penetrate into the creative process of the commanders and staffs, to ascertain why they did precisely this and not something else, and to gain a maximum of benefit for resolving present-day tasks.

FOOTNOTES

- * By sector of the main thrust one understands the area of terrain on which the main efforts of the advancing troops are to be concentrated in the aim of defeating the enemy groupings and taking important areas (objectives).
- 1. V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 40, p 85.
- 2. Ibid., pp 283-285.
- 3. See: "Vtoraya mirovaya voyna. Itogi i uroki" [World War II. Results and Lessons], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1985, pp 53, 54.
- 4. See: "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna 1941-1945. Entsiklopediya" [The Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. An Encyclopedia], Moscow, Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1985, p 466.
- 5. "Korennoy perelom vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne. Po materialam voyenno-nauchnoy konferentsii" [The Fundamental Turning Point in World War II. From the Materials of a Military Scientific Conference], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1985, p 7.
- 6. See: "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 6, 1976, p 81.
- 7. KOMMUNIST, No 6, 1985, p 56.
- 8. "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna Sovetskogo Soyuz 1941-1945. Kratkaya istoriya" [The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union of 1941-1945. A Concise History], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1984, p 214.
- 9. KOMMUNIST, No 6, 1985, p 57.
- 10. G. K. Zhukov, "Vospominaniya i razmyshleniya" [Remembrances and Reflections], Moscow, AFN, Vol 2, 1985, pp 76, 77.
- 11. K. K. Rokossovskiy, "Soldatskiy dolg" [A Soldier's Duty], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1985, p 250.
- 12. "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna 1941-1945. Entsiklopediya," p 81.
- 13. See: "Operatsii Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne 1941-1945. Voenno-istoricheskiy ocherk" [Operations of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. Military History Essay], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol III, 1958, p 426.

14. "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna 1941-1945. Entsiklopediya," pp 130-131.

15. G. K. Zhukov, op. cit., Vol 2, p 279.

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DEFENSIVE COMBAT OF RIFLE DIVISION IN REPELLING OFFENSIVE BY SUPERIOR ENEMY FORCES IN INITIAL PERIOD OF WAR

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, July 86 (signed to press 25 Jun 86) pp 41-45

[Article by Candidate of Historical Sciences, Col N. M. Ramanichev]

[Text] At the start of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet troops which were stationed directly by the frontier took the full brunt of the surprise attack and were forced to conduct defensive battles against superior enemy forces. Thus, in the defensive areas of the 87th, 124th and 41st Rifle Divisions of the Southwestern Front and which were on the sector of the main thrust of Army Group South, the Nazi troops had more than a 4-5-fold superiority in personnel and 2- or 3-fold superiority in artillery.

In the event of war, in accord with the plan, the 87th, 124th and 41st Rifle Divisions, together with units from the fortified areas, were to defend the areas previously organized along the frontier and prevent the enemy from breaking through to Soviet territory.

The forward edge of the defenses of the units from the 124th Division ran directly next to the frontier, while those of the 87th and 41st were 2.5-10 km from it. Ahead of the front of the last two divisions, a forward defense area (security zone) had been created. This was to be defended by forward detachments moved up from each first echelon regiment consisting of a reinforced rifle battalion. The surprise attack made it possible for the enemy to anticipate the units of the 87th and 124th Divisions in reaching the defensive areas which had been prepared on the eve of the war. The division commanders, having lost contact with the corps and army staffs, had to fight independently. Without having any data on the situation, the commander of the 124th Rifle Division, Maj Gen F. G. Sushchiy, ordered the regiments to move up to their sectors along the frontier. In the course of moving up, the units and formations, encountering the superior enemy forces, endeavored to push them back into the initial position and take up the defensive areas designated by the cover plan along the frontier. These attempts were unsuccessful primarily due to the numerical superiority of the enemy. The outcome of the division's meeting engagement as a whole was substantially influenced by the fact that its units were fighting along a broad front, they entered battle at

different times without having close coordination and contact with one another.

The commander of the 87th Rifle Division, Maj Gen F. F. Alyabushev, due to the exacerbated situation on the frontier, several days prior to the war had moved the regiments to their defensive areas. However, on 20 June, the division had been returned to their permanent positions. Two forward detachments were left in the area of the forward defensive zone, each consisting of a rifle battalion reinforced by an artillery battery.(1) This made it possible to check the advance of the enemy troops and gain time for bringing the defensive works of the fortified area to a state of combat readiness. The joint actions by the forward detachments and the subunits of the UR [fortified area] provided the necessary conditions for bringing the division's main forces to a state of combat readiness.

Having received data on the breakthrough of significant enemy forces on the axis of Ustilug, Vladimir-Volynskiy, the division's commander took a decision not to send the units to their areas set by the cover plan but rather to launch an attack with the first echelon regiments against the enemy grouping which had broken in, to throw it back and to occupy the designated defensive line.

The deployment line for the offensive was set close to the alert assembly areas while the positions of the divisional artillery were directly in the assembly area. The simultaneous attack by two regiments on a relatively narrow sector of the front with the support of all the divisional artillery made it possible to defeat the enemy units which had broken through and occupy the defensive line in accord with the cover plan.

Units of the 41st Rifle Division were also able to occupy the defensive sectors designated by the plan (Diagram 1). Regardless of the fact that the order from the 6th Army military council for opening the packets with the operational plan in the event of war had been received by the division's staff only on 22 June at 0530 hours, the alerting of its units had commenced significantly sooner upon the decision of the division's chief of staff, Col N. V. Yerevin, who was in the camp and at around 0400 hours had received a message from the commandants of the border sectors that the enemy had crossed the state frontier with large forces in the division's entire area. The division's commander, Maj Gen G. N. Mikushev, who arrived shortly thereafter ordered the units to move up to their defensive areas.

Units of the 41st Division, in moving up battalion by battalion to the frontier, occupied their areas and this was aided primarily by the presence of the forward defensive area which took 1.5-2 hours for the enemy to cross. In encountering organized resistance, the enemy with superior forces endeavored to split up our divisions and at the same time seek out bypass routes. After the units had occupied the defensive areas, the command of the formations was confronted with the task of resisting the splitting up and encirclement.

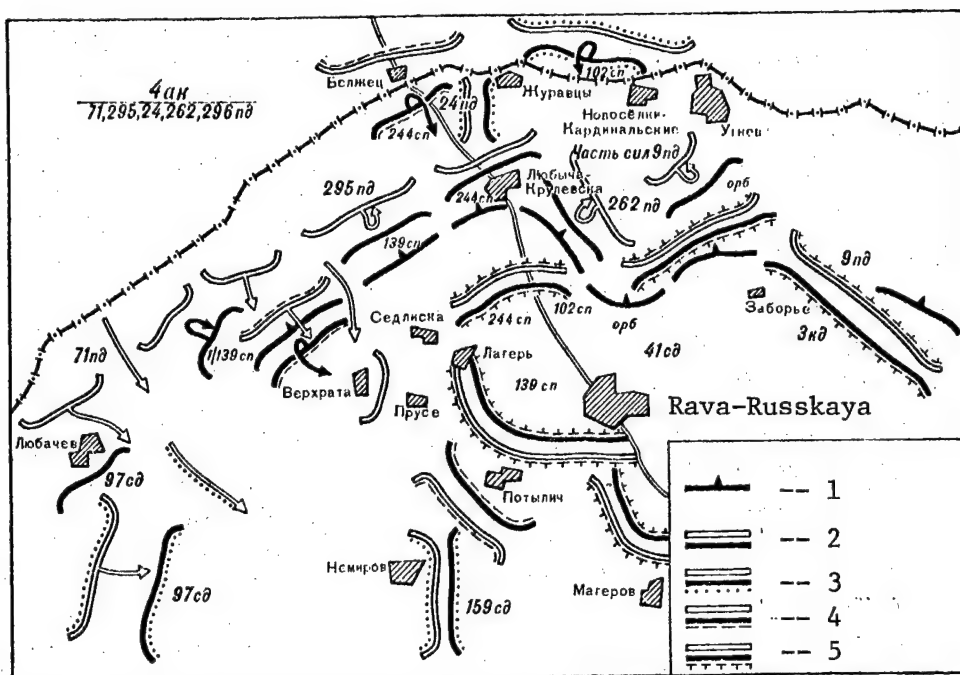
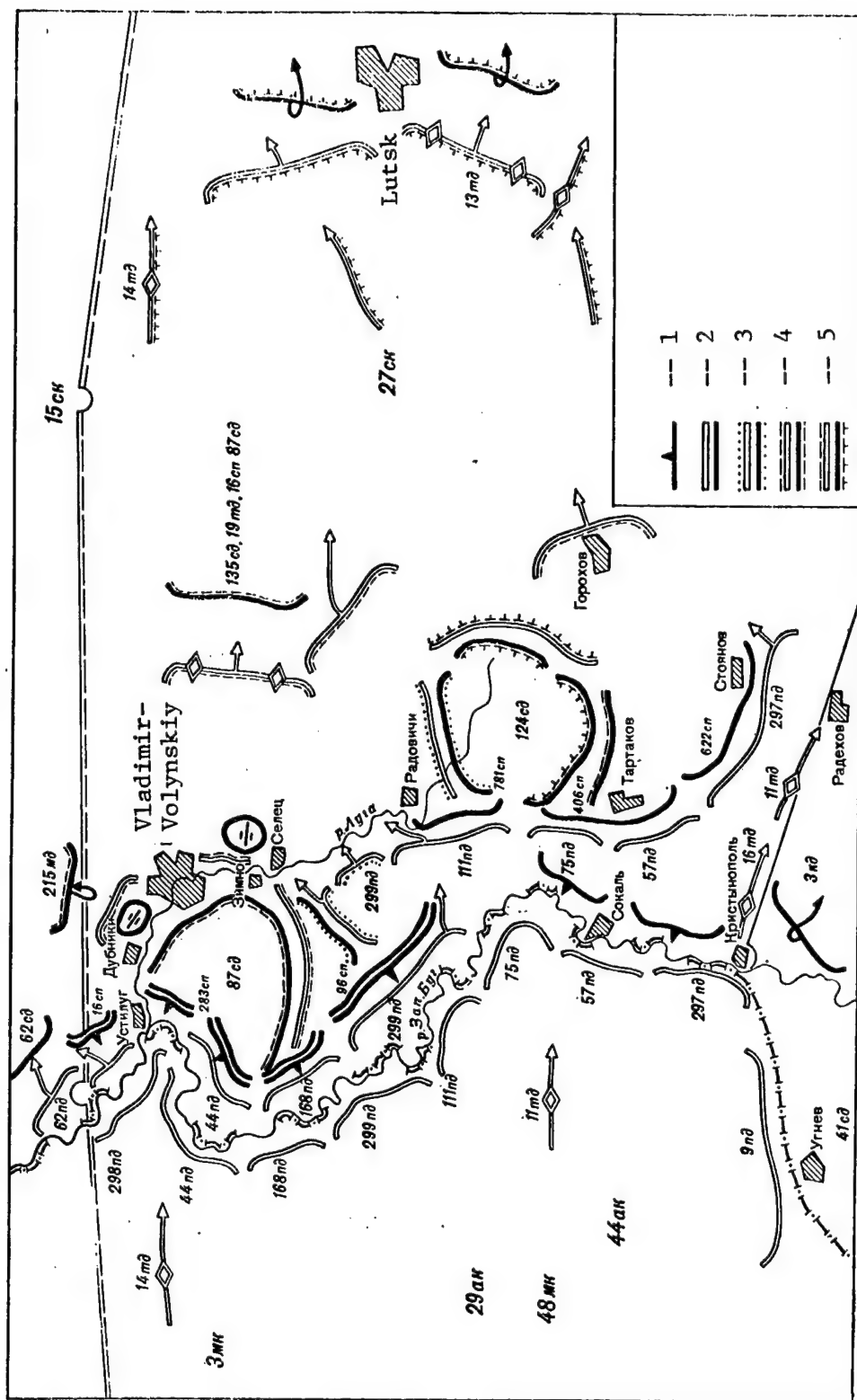


Diagram 1. Combat Operations of the 1st Rifle Division
(22-26 June 1941)

Key:

- 1--Forward edge of UR
- 2--Troop position at end of 22 June 1941
- 3--Troop position at end of 23 June 1941
- 4--Troop position at end of 24 June 1941
- 5--Troop position at end of 26 June 1941



It was possible to avoid splitting up due to the high activeness of the defenses and this was manifested primarily in the launching of counterattacks against the enemy groupings which had driven into the defenses as well as ahead of the forward defensive edge. In the course of repelling enemy attacks, the commanders employed the broad maneuvering of men and weapons as well as artillery fire against the enemy preparing to advance.

The counterattacks were carried out, as a rule, with the second echelon forces together with subunits from the first echelon regiments fighting on the flanks of the enemy which had broken through. Thus, on 22 June, during the second half of the day, the enemy drove a wedge between the first echelon regiments of the 87th Division and captured Ustilug, committing tanks to the breakthrough (Diagram 2). The division's commander moved up two artillery battalions for direct laying against them. The second echelon regiment with a portion of the forces from the first echelon regiments counterattacked the enemy which had broken through and threw it back to the frontier.

In the defensive area of the 124th Division, the enemy broke through on the sector of the right flank regiment (Diagram 2). The division's commander eliminated the breach by an attack of the second echelon regiment together with a second echelon battalion from a regiment the defenses of which had been breached.

The counterattack in the defensive area of the 41st Rifle Division was carried out by two first echelon regiments on 23 June after the enemy had suffered significant losses from the intense artillery shelling carried out and was forced to temporarily go over to the defensive (Diagram 1). The attack by our units was a surprise and the Nazis were forced to retreat. In pursuing them, the 102d Rifle Regiment of Lt Col G. G. Chumarin reached the state frontier on a sector about 8 km wide and pushed into enemy territory.(2)

By the end of 23 June, the enemy, in threatening to break through on the sector of the left-flank 139th Regiment was squeezing its subunits. The division's commander, without reserves, brought the 102d Regiment back to the initial position in order to increase troop density by shortening the width of the defensive area and providing forces to aid the left-flank regiment which was reinforced by an artillery regiment and, having carried out the regrouping, went over to a counterattack, throwing the enemy back beyond the line of the fortified area.

At midday on 23 June, the artillery of the 41st Rifle Division made several intense shellings against the main enemy grouping fighting on the Tomaszow, Rava-Russkaya axis. As a result, the German Command was forced to put off for several hours the offensive planned for the morning.

Simultaneously with the attempts to split the battle formation of our defending divisions, the enemy, in utilizing the exposed flanks, tried to surround them. It was successful in this when the commanders of the formations and superior levels did not have the necessary forces to resist the encirclement. This happened to the 87th and 124th Divisions the units of which were outflanked by the enemy and surrounded.

In those instances when the superior command possessed the necessary forces, it initiated measures to oppose encirclement. Thus, on 23 June, the 159th Rifle Division of the VI Rifle Corps which was in the second echelon attacked the enemy grouping which had come out in the rear of the 41st Division.(3) Starting on 24 June, the right flank of the 41st Division was securely supported by the 3d Cavalry Division which was on the defensive facing north to the northeast of Rava-Russkaya. These measures made it possible for the 41st Division which was half surrounded to hold the Rava-Russkaya area until 27 June.

The division commanders initiated measures to prevent encirclement using their own forces. They sent ahead of time a portion of the forces for occupying the defensive on the threatened sector. When on 23 June, the enemy broke through in the boundary between the 87th and 67th Rifle Divisions to the north of Ustilug, Maj Gen F. F. Alyabushev decided to pull back the right-flank regiment, to turn it facing north and cover the division's flank and rear. However, in the pullback of the regiment, the enemy broke through in the boundary with the adjacent unit and cut the regiment off from the main forces.(4)

In the aims of resisting encirclement, the commanders of the 87th and 124th Rifle Divisions endeavored to pull back the units to new lines, but under the conditions of the deep envelopment by the enemy this did not provide the proper result.

In analyzing the attempt to resist encirclement by the forces of the divisions themselves, it must be pointed out that the chief condition for success here was the prompt maneuvering of the men and weapons. Here the greatest effect was achieved by the early assigning of forces to the threatened sector.

In fighting in an encirclement the main task was to repel the enemy's attempts to split the division forces. This was achieved by pulling back the units to the best lines, by shortening the length of the defensive front, by organizing an all-round defense and assigning strong reserves.

The combat of the 41st, 87th and 124th Rifle Divisions showed that successful combat against superior enemy forces to a significant degree was determined by the activeness of the defenses, by the steadfastness of the troops and by the reliability of command and control.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Kiyevskiy Krasnoznamenny. Kratkiy ocherk istorii Krasnoznamennogo Kiyevskogo voyennogo okruga 1919-1969" [The Kiev Red Banner Military District. A Brief Essay on the History of the Red Banner Kiev Military District of 1919-1969], Kiev, Izd-vo politicheskogo upravleniya KVO, 1969, p 188.
2. TsAMO [Central Archives of the Ministry of Defense], folio 334, inv. 5307, file 11, sheet 106.
3. Ibid., file 10, sheet 6.

4. Ibid., folio 625, inv. 27057, file 7, sheet 67.

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QUESTION OF STRATEGIC OPERATIONS IN THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR OF 1941-1945

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, July 86 (signed to press 25 Jun 86) pp 46-48

[Articles by Doctor of Military Sciences, Professor, Maj Gen (Ret) Kh. M. Dzhelaukhov and Candidate of Historical Sciences, Col B. N. Petrov, published under the rubric "Debate"]

[Text] [Article by Maj Gen (Ret) Kh. M. Dzhelaukhov]

In the article "Question of Strategic Operations in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945" (VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL, No 10, 1985, pp 10-23), V. V. Gurkin and M. I. Golovnin have attempted to bring clarity into the classification of the major operations conducted by the Soviet Armed Forces during the war years. In the table appended to the text, they give a list of 52 strategic operations (15 defensive and 37 offensive) indicating the army and fleet formations involved in them, the forces of the opposing enemy, the spatial scope of the fighting and its results. The elaboration of such a table will undoubtedly have a positive impact upon achieving a unity of views on this question.

It should be pointed out that a majority of the operations listed in the table have already been named and described in official publications as strategic ones. There are, by count, around 30 of them (up to 6 defensive and 24 offensive). The remainder previously either did not figure at all in the military history literature under those names given them by the authors or were not considered as strategic ones.

We feel that as a whole the authors have correctly set the criteria on the basis of which one or another operation can be considered as strategic. At the same time, in order to list an operation as strategic or to name certain combat and engagements conducted by the fronts as such, it is not enough to approach them with the measures of these criteria. Extensive research must be carried out, the plan of Hq SHC must be investigated profoundly, the tasks of the fronts must be examined, the grouping of men and weapons, their operational configuration, the course of the hostilities and the retaliatory measures by the enemy must be analyzed, the role of the operation in the campaign must be set and the achieved results assessed.

Unfortunately, in the article of V. V. Gurkin and M. I. Golovnin there is no such profound research. In addition, in analyzing specific operations, the authors have not always applied the criteria proposed by themselves completely and correctly, and they at times overlook the fact that a strategic operation as a form of strategic actions is an aggregate of attacks, operations and combat actions which are coordinated in terms of goal, place and time and carried out by the field forces and formations of the various armed services for achieving strategic aims. In this context the considering of certain operations by the authors as strategic ones could be debated. For example, the Baltic, Belorussian and Lwow-Chernovtsy Defensive Operations mentioned by them do not fully conform to the criteria and definition of a strategic operation. It is essential to emphasize that a strategic defense certainly need not to include the conducting of strategic defensive operations in all stages, although they are its important content. As is known, in the course of the border engagements during the initial period of the war, operations were conducted by armies and fronts, counterstrikes were launched by tank and mechanized corps and battles and engagements developed during the retreat of the troops. But these actions were not always coordinated in terms of aim, place and time and were not carried out according to a single concept and plan of the Supreme Command. For this reason they cannot be called strategic defensive operations on the northwestern, western and southwestern sectors. This runs counter to historical truth.

There also are not sufficient grounds for presenting the strategic offensive by the Soviet troops on the Right-Bank Ukraine in the 1944 winter Campaign as a Dnieper-Carpathian Operation. During this period (24 December 1943-17 April 1944), here were conducted 10 major offensive operations by fronts and groups of fronts and significant strategic results were achieved in the course of these. For example, the Korsun-Shevchenkivskiy Operation in terms of the number of surrounded enemy was, in essence, a second Stalingrad. In line with this, in the system of offensive actions on the Right-Bank Ukraine one must see not one but rather several strategic operations and this requires the conducting of additional research.

It also seems ill-advised to classify as strategic such operations as the defensive operation in the Arctic, the Kerch-Feodosiya Landing Operation, the Novorossiysk-Taman and Petsamo-Kirkenes Offensive Operations. Although each of these pursued definite strategic aims on the flanks of the Soviet-German Front, in terms of their scale they did not go beyond the limits of front operations on maritime sectors involving naval forces. The Rzhev-Vyazma Offensive Operation (1943) must also not be considered as strategic. This was a particular operation by the troops of the Western Front to eliminate the Rzhev-Vyazma Salient. Moreover, its aim of encircling and destroying the enemy grouping defending on the salient, was not fully achieved.

Certain operations which were not closely coordinated are sometimes artificially lumped by the authors within one strategic operation. For example, the fighting to defend Odessa and in the Melitopol area, in being carried out more than 400 km apart, did not have an operational link and were not united by a common plan although they are classified as the Odessa-Melitopol Strategic Defensive Operation. There are not sufficient grounds for this. It is also ill-advised to isolate a Donbass-Rostov Strategic Defensive

Operation. These, in essence, were two successive defensive operations by the troops of the Southern Front and each had its own aim and achieved results. While in the course of the offensive in the Donbass (Donbass Operation) the enemy succeeded in breaching the front of our troops to the operational depth, in the Rostov Operation the enemy was halted on the line of Rostov, Shakhty and was unable to exploit the tactical success into an operational one. In suffering losses, it abandoned a further offensive. During the subsequent counterstrike by the 37th Army and the going over of the troops to the counteroffensive, the enemy was thrown back behind the Mius River.

One can agree completely with the authors in their assessment of the East Pomeranian Offensive Operation as a strategic one. This was carried out by troops of two fronts (First and Second Belorussian) involving the forces of the Baltic Fleet in the aim of eliminating the threat of an enemy attack in the flank of the main strategic grouping of our troops fighting on the Berlin sector. Without the elimination of the enemy East Pomeranian grouping, the Berlin Operation could have assumed an extended nature.

As a whole, the list of strategic operations worked out by V. V. Gurkin and M. I. Golovnin needs further clarification on the basis of a profound examination of the operations of the Great Patriotic War and particularly the directives of Hq SHC, the commanders-in-chief of the sectors, the commanders of the fronts, the operational plans and other documents.

[Article by Col B. N. Petrov]

The necessity of working out a list of strategic operations has long been present. As has been correctly pointed out in the introduction to the article of V. V. Gurkin and M. I. Golovnin, at present there is no uniform approach to determining the names and the number of strategic operations. Obviously the lack of such a list can explain the reason why the Vyborg-Petrozavodsk Strategic Offensive Operation was dropped out of the Soviet Military Encyclopedia. Incidentally, in encyclopedia publications where the operations are described it would be to the point to indicate their scale (strategic, front, army).

We feel that the list proposed for discussion by the readers should be supplemented with the Tikhvin Offensive Operation (the counteroffensive at Tikhvin) and carried out by Soviet troops from 10 November through 30 December 1941 within the Battle of Leningrad.

As is known, this was one of the first major offensive operations by the Soviet Army in the Great Patriotic War. It involved troops from the 54th Army of the Leningrad Front, the 4th and 52d Armies which up to 17 December 1941 were directly subordinate to Hq SHC and then were incorporated in the Volkhov Front as well as troops of the Novgorod Army Group of the Northwestern Front.

As a result of the counteroffensive at Tikhvin, the Soviet troops caused major damage to 10 enemy divisions and advanced 100-120 km to the west. Through-traffic along the Northern Railroad was resumed. The plan of the Nazi Command to completely isolate Leningrad from the rest of the nation and to starve it out was thwarted. The counteroffensive at Tikhvin established good conditions

for the Soviet Army counteroffensive which got underway in December and contributed to the defeat of the Nazi troops at Moscow.

Thus, the Tikhvin Offensive Operation meets the three main criteria given in the article by V. V. Gurkin and M. I. Golovnin and by which it could be considered as a strategic operation. In the first place, it involved the troops of three fronts. Secondly, the actions of these fronts were coordinated by Hq SHC. Thirdly, the operation led to the achieving of major goals which were of strategic significance.

It may be hoped that the published list of strategic operations will be a basis for working out a more labor-intensive and complete list of front offensive and defensive operations conducted during the war years as the need for this has long existed.

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MILITARY COUNCIL ACTIVITIES IN OPERATIONS OF THIRD PERIOD OF GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, July 86 (signed to press 25 Jun 86) pp 59-64

[Article by Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, Col L. V. Kalinchuk, published under the rubric "Party Political Work"; the article has been written from the experience of political work on a front]

[Text] The military councils of the fronts and armies entered the third period of the Great Patriotic War organizationally strong and enriched with significant experience in preparing and successfully carrying out defensive and offensive operations. In the battles of Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk, in the engagements for the Dnieper and in a series of front and army operations during the first and second periods of the war, their art of military and political leadership of the troops increased.

The content and work methods of the military councils during the third period of the war to a decisive degree were determined by the particular features of the military-political situation on the front. In 1944-1945, their activities were carried out under the new conditions of virtually an on-going offensive by the Soviet troops. The shifting of hostilities outside the USSR brought about a further increase in the scope and complexity of the tasks confronting the military councils and a widening of their functions. But, as before, leadership over the combat actions of the troops remained the main thing for the military councils of the fronts and armies. The fact that Nazi Germany still possessed significant resources for waging war and its army continued to put up significant resistance demanded that the military councils decisively increase the combat capability of the Soviet troops, their moral-political superiority over the enemy and the force of the blows against the enemy.

The military councils took a direct part in planning and conducting the operations and they thoroughly prepared the troops for them. Under their leadership under front conditions, military training and indoctrination of the personnel were carried out and advanced experience in combat operations was generalized and introduced. For example, on the eve of the Vistula-Oder Operation, in accord with the plan of the military council of the First Belorussian Front, map games, tactical exercises in the field similar to the zone of the forthcoming offensive were conducted for the leadership of the

armies, the individual corps, the chiefs of the branches of troops, the military council members and the chiefs of the political bodies. According to the instructions of the military council of the 4th Tank Army which was part of the First Ukrainian Front, the main efforts were to be focused on the weapons training of the tank troops, the artillery troops, submachine gunners, training the subunits and units in nighttime actions, the ability to carry out rapid maneuvering marches, to capture crossings, to cross water obstacles, to hold and widen bridgeheads and destroy the enemy in meeting engagements.(1)

Proceeding from the decisions of the party Central Committee and the set strategic slogans, the military councils gave particularly close attention to improving and organizing political work in the troops and to strengthening their moral-political potential. They directed the activities of the commanders, the political bodies and party organizations at developing high offensive zeal in the men and an unquenchable desire by decisive actions to defeat the Nazi invaders and victoriously conclude the war.

At the sessions of the military councils of the fronts and armies, they systematically discussed the questions of organizing and conducting party political work during the operations of the third period of the war. Thus, the military council of the Second Ukrainian Front in preparing the Iasi-Kishinev Operation heard a report by the chief of the political directorate "On Shortcomings in Party Political Work in the Units of the Front and Measures to Eliminate Them." On the basis of the adopted decree, the army military councils carried out the necessary measures aimed at eliminating the flaws in the combat activities of the troops and improving information on the state of affairs in the units and formations. They paid more attention to the study, recruitment and placement of officer personnel, to indoctrinational work with them, to the strengthening of one-man command and to providing help to the commanders in the instruction and indoctrination of subordinates. Primary significance was given to political support for the precise and unswerving fulfillment of combat orders. Directly before the offensive, the front military council sent a directive to the troops which outlined the content of party political work in the forthcoming fighting. After the operation, it summed up the results of this work, having pointed out that it contributed to achieving high offensive zeal of the personnel and to the strengthening of military discipline, order and organization in the units.(2)

The commanders and military council members set specific tasks for the commanders and political bodies in carrying out party political work. Characteristic in this regard were the instructions of the military council member of the Leningrad Front, A. A. Zhdanov, issued on 4 February 1944. The task was set of establishing high offensive drive in the troops in the aim of surmounting the strong enemy defenses in the Luga area and pursuing the enemy rapidly as well as seeing to it that the moral inspiration of the men was backed up with their military skill. They were to focus the personnel on the intense and protracted fighting, and raise in each man the feeling of responsibility for the outcome of the operation and the desire to multiply the valor and glory of Leningrad.(3)

In showing concern for the effectiveness of party political work in the operations, the military councils sought to bring its content, forms and

methods into conformity with the specific situational conditions and they concentrated the activities of the political bodies and all the political personnel on the crucial sectors. The commanders and military council members demanded a stronger party influence primarily in the units and subunits fighting in the first echelons, on the main axes and a shifting of the center of gravity in political indoctrination to the squad, crew, team, platoon and company.

The military councils concentrated on strengthening the party organizations of the units and subunits and having the communists set an example in combat. They gave great importance to establishing militant party organizations in the companies, particularly in the first echelon rifle units of the fighting troops. Often under the conditions of intense fighting, for quickly rebuilding the party organizations, the military councils resorted to redistributing the communists. Thus, with the permission of the military council of the Second Belorussian Front in the Belorussian Operation, 3,000 communists were sent from the rear and special subunits to the rifle companies and in the course of the East Prussian Operation some 5,000 communists.(4)

The concern of the military councils had a favorable effect upon strengthening the party organizations and increasing their role in the combat activities of the troops. While in 1943, on the First Ukrainian Front, each month an average of 11,013 men joined the party, in 1944, the figure was 13,770 men.(5) The First and Second Belorussian, the First, Second, Third and Fourth Ukrainian Fronts as of 1 April 1945 had over 1.1 million communists and almost 30,000 primary party organizations.(6)

The commanders and military council members worked constantly so that party political work was concrete and purposeful and closely tied to the tasks of the troops. Thus, on the basis of instructions from the military councils of the Ukrainian Fronts, the commanders, political bodies and party organizations in the operations to liberate the Right-Bank Ukraine concentrated the main efforts on explaining to the personnel the demands of the Supreme High Command and the specific missions of the troops: to boldly and decisively shatter the enemy defenses, the pursue the enemy day and night, to prevent the enemy from digging in on intermediate lines, by bold maneuvering to cut the enemy's lines of communications, to surround and break up its groupings, to destroy and capture personnel and equipment. By propagandizing the military oath, the requirements of military discipline, the combat traditions and glorious victories of the Soviet Army, a readiness was instilled of carrying out the commander's orders at any price.(7)

In 1944-1945, the military councils paid more attention to work with young recruits. During this period there was a significant influx of inductees into the army from the western oblasts of the Ukraine, Belorussia as well as from Moldavia and the Baltic Soviet republics. Many of the new recruits were illiterate or semiliterate; being in occupied territory, they for an extended time had been exposed to the pernicious influence of Nazi and bourgeois nationalist propaganda. Indoctrinational work with this contingent of the personnel was viewed by the military councils as a primary political task. Having discussed the content of the work with the new recruits, the military councils elaborated effective measures to improve it. In November 1944, this

question was examined by the military council of the First Ukrainian Front. (8)
In May 1944, the Western Front military council sent a corresponding directive to the troops. (9)

The military councils and political bodies of the fronts and armies played an active organizing role in helping the population of the liberated areas and in conducting ideological indoctrination with them. For example, for these purposes, in accord with the decree of the military council of the 39th Army "On Conducting Agitation-Propaganda, Mass Explanatory Work Among the Population of the Liberated Territories," adopted during the period of fighting for the liberation of Lithuania, assemblies, meetings and talks were held, films were shown, performances of the Red Army amateur artistic activities were organized and the population was issued newspapers, posters and literature. (10)

With the expulsion of the Nazi invaders from Soviet land, the liberation began for the Nazi-enslaved peoples of Europe. Under these conditions political leadership of the troops assumed greater importance. The military councils were confronted with many new problems of a political, moral and social nature.

In May 1944, the Politburo of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Central Committee discussed the tasks of the military councils under the new situation. The meeting was attended by the members of the front military councils V. N. Bogatkin, F. Ye. Bokov, N. A. Bulganin, P. I. Yefimov, A. S. Zheltov, K. V. Kraynyukov, D. S. Leonov, V. Ye. Makarov, L. Z. Mekhlis, M. V. Rudakov, N. Ye. Subbotin, I. Z. Susaykov, K. F. Telegin and T. F. Shtykov. (11)

On the basis of the instructions of the Politburo of the VKP(b) Central Committee and the directive of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army of 19 July 1944, the military councils initiated active work in the troops for the international indoctrination of the men, for increasing their vigilance and explaining the essence of the liberation mission of our Armed Forces in the European countries. The former member of the military council of the First Belorussian Front, Lt Gen K. F. Telegin, recalled that with the receiving of these instructions, the military council and political directorate worked out a plan of practical measures considering the new conditions. Ideological and political work was centered on propagandizing the ideas of Soviet patriotism and proletarian internationalism, the advantages of the Soviet social and state system, and explaining the instructions of the Soviet government on the relationship to the countries and peoples the territory of which had been entered by the Soviet Army.

With the shifting of hostilities outside the USSR, the military councils sent special orders, directives and letters to the troops.

The directive of the Third Belorussian Front military council pointed out that the advance of our troops deep into the territory of East Prussia and "the new situation under which the troops are fighting urgently demand a daily rise in vigilance, constant combat readiness, rigid discipline and organization,

better quality political work in the troops, and the greatest possible strengthening of the political and moral state of the personnel."(12)

In the question of strengthening the political and moral state and increasing the offensive drive of the men, of great importance were the appeals, directives, congratulatory orders and telegrams from the military councils. Thus, prior to the Berlin Operation the military councils of the First Ukrainian, the First and Second Belorussian Fronts appealed to the troops to honorably carry out the combat order. When our troops entered the suburbs of Berlin, the First Belorussian Front military council again urged the men to complete the defeat of the enemy faster and more decisively. "...Ahead of you, Soviet knights, is Berlin," stated the appeal. "You should take Berlin and take it as quickly as possible in order to keep the enemy off balance.... To the storming of Berlin! To the complete and final victory, combat comrades!"(13)

In working for the prompt and broad informing of the troops of the slogans and appeals of the party, the orders of the "Supreme Commander-in-Chief, the announcements of Sovinformburo [Soviet Information Bureau] and appeals, the military councils obliged the political bodies to put out special issues of newspapers and pamphlets and to hold assemblies, meetings, lectures, reports and other measures.

The commanders and military council ministers met systematically with the command and political personnel, the rank and file and NCOs in the units and subunits and often directly in the foxholes, trenches and combat positions. In particular, prior to the storming of Konigsberg, the commander of the Third Belorussian Front, MSU A. M. Vasilevskiy, the military council member, Lt Gen V. Ye. Makarov, and the chief of the political directorate, Maj Gen S. B. Kazbintsev, paid a call to the armies and formations which had been given the mission of capturing the city, they personally checked their readiness on the spot to carry out the combat order and provided the necessary help.

In the course of the operations abroad, particularly on German territory, the military councils together with the political bodies carried out the important task of protecting the Soviet soldiers from the pernicious influence of Nazi propaganda. The focus was on a further strengthening of agitation and propaganda work with all categories of servicemen. This can be seen, for example, from the instructions of the military council and political directorate of the Second Ukrainian Front. Having analyzed activities in the area of indoctrinating the personnel during the period of the operations on Romanian and Hungarian territory, they proposed that all agitation and propaganda work be organized in accord with the new conditions, giving primary significance to the concreteness of the agitation and to using vital facts and examples in it. The extraordinary importance of unmasking the bourgeois orders was pointed out as well as the propagandizing of the advantages of the socialist system, the aims and tasks of the great liberation mission of the Soviet Army.(14)

In the aim of indoctrinating the personnel in profound patriotic feelings, the military councils recommended that extensive use be made of the heroic traditions of the Russian people and the combat traditions of the Soviet Armed

Forces. In the units of the Third Ukrainian Front, for example, while they were stationed on Romanian and Bulgarian territory, talks were held about the heroism of the Russian soldiers in the war of 1877-1878. An honor guard was set up by the monuments to the Russian soldiers and meetings were held. The new recruits were acquainted with the Heroes of the Soviet Union, the veterans and honored soldiers and told them of the military traditions of the subunits and units of the front and army.

A great deal of attention was given by the military councils to ensuring a correct attitude by the Soviet military to the population of the countries where fighting was underway. On 23 February 1945, the military council of the Second Belorussian Front issued an order and the military council of the First Belorussian Front issued a directive where they demanded that the military councils of the armies and the command of the formations strengthen political indoctrination in the troops and outlined a number of organizational measures.

A new function for the military councils was assisting the inhabitants of the liberated areas of the Central and Southeast European countries in restoring economic and cultural life. In being guided by the instructions of the VKP(b) Central Committee, the military councils organized normal relations with the local administration, they helped it in rebuilding the economy, transport and housing destroyed by the occupiers, they established administrative bodies on the liberated territory and supervised their activities.

The aiding of the German population was an act of the greatest humanism by the Soviet people and the men of the Soviet Armed Forces. Characteristic in this regard were the measures of the military council of the First Belorussian Front. For supplying food to the Berlin population, it obliged the military councils of the armies and military commandants to conduct an organized accounting of the food, livestock and potatoes on occupied enemy territory and prohibited the confiscation of food products from the German population. The task was set of assigning food supplies from the army and front stocks in the event that the existing resources were insufficient for the normal supply of the Berlin inhabitants.(15) From the supplies of the fronts, the city received 6 million pounds of flour and grain and a large amount of other products.(16)

Under the leadership of the military councils, political work was conducted actively among the population of the liberated countries. This was aimed at unmasking the enemy slander of the Soviet Union and its army, instilling confidence in the policy of the Soviet government and a friendly attitude toward the Soviet people and its men. The aims and tasks of the entry of Soviet troops onto the territory of foreign states was explained in appeals to the population and which the military councils of the fronts made upon authorization of the Soviet government. In the appeal of the military council of the Second Ukrainian Front to the Romanian people, for example, it was pointed out that the entry of Soviet troops onto Romanian territory was caused by exceptional military necessity and that the Soviet army had entered Romania not as a conqueror but as the liberator of the Romanian people from Nazi suppression.(17) The military council of the front directed analogous appeals to the population of Hungary and Austria. The military councils of the First

Ukrainian, First and Second Belorussian Fronts published appeals "to the Polish People."

In the course of the operations abroad, the military councils established direct contacts with the progressive forces. Thus, in considering the acuteness of the class struggle between the democratic and reactionary forces of Poland, the State Defense Committee in July 1944 proposed that the military councils establish friendly relations with the powers organized by the Polish National Liberation Committee. Even before the entry of the Soviet troops into Bulgaria, the Command of the Third Ukrainian Front (commander, MSU F. I. Tolbukhin, military council member, Col Gen A. S. Zheltov) established contact with the National Liberation Rebel Army of Bulgaria and with the local committees of the Bulgarian Workers Party in the frontier area. (18)

In the course of the Great Patriotic War, the military councils were the dependable proponents of Communist Party policy in the Soviet Armed Forces. During the third period of the war, their role was further increased as collective bodies of military political leadership of the troops. They honorably carried out the tasks posed for them by the party and the government and made a worthy contribution to achieving victory over the Nazi invaders.

FOOTNOTES

1. TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 236, inv. 24834, file 8, sheets 3-4.
2. See: "Partiyno-politicheskaya rabota v Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Silakh v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945" [Party-Political Work in the Soviet Armed Forces During the Years of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, pp 333-334.
3. TsAMO, folio 32, inv. 11318, file 83, sheet 12.
4. Ibid., file 2, sheet 20.
5. Ibid., folio 236, inv. 2727, file 25, sheet 106.
6. "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 10, 1979, p 380.
7. Ibid., Vol 8, 1977, p 65.
8. TsAMO, folio 326, inv. 2727, file 20, sheet 322.
9. Ibid., folio 388, inv. 8708, file 35, sheets 6, 7.
10. Ibid., folio 394, inv. 9070, file 29, sheets 33-45.
11. See: "Istoriya KPSS" [CPSU History], Moscow, Politizdat, Vol 5, Book 1, 1970, p 589.
12. TsAMO, folio 394, inv. 9070, file 40, sheet 21.

13. "Istoriya KPSS," Vol 5, Book 1, p 609.
14. TsAMO, folio 240, inv. 2839, file 34, sheets 330-332.
15. Ibid., folio 233, inv. 2380, file 41, sheets 321-323.
16. "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna Sovetskogo Soyuz 1941-1945. Kratkaya istoriya" [The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union of 1941-1945. Concise History], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1984, p 429.
17. TsAMO, folio 236, inv. 2727, file 16, sheet 134.
18. See: "Istoriya KPSS," Vol 5, Book 1, p 593.

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METHODS AND FORMS OF FIGHTING BY GENERALISSIMO A. V. SUVOROV

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[Article by Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor and Honored Scientist of the RSFSR, Maj Gen (Ret) A. A. Stokov, published under the rubric "Scientific Papers and Information"; the article is about the book "To the Glory of the Russian Fatherland"]

[Text] The unprecedented qualitative development of Russian military art in the second half of the 18th century is linked to the name of the great general A. V. Suvorov. Under his leadership the Russian troops dealt crushing defeats to the enemy.

Suvorov excelled in creative, innovative activities and total dedication to the homeland. In a letter to A. I. Bibikov of 25 November 1771, he wrote: "I have wrapped my good name in the glory of my fatherland and have considered all successes for its well-being.... I have forgotten myself where one must think about the common good." (1) Suvorov's firm belief in the invincibility of the Russian soldier and in the strength and might of Russia shaped the words which were to become prophetic: "All Europe moves in vain against Russia. There it will find Thermopylae, Leonidas and its grave." (2)

In the second half of the 18th century, Russian industry had achieved major advances: the number of forging-stamping, metalworking and metal casting enterprises had increased significantly. Russia produced much more iron than the leading countries of Western Europe (by the end of the 18th century, 1.5-fold more than England). This also determined the high technical base of the Russian Army which had modern weapons and in particular technically advanced artillery. The changes linked to the economic development of the nation and the increased technical base for war as well as the presence of the Russian Army which was advanced in terms of its manning system had a determining impact upon the genesis and development of Suvorov's science of winning.

Suvorov has gone down in history as a great general and an inspired military theorist and the author of an outstanding work of Russian and world military thought of those times, "Nauka pobezhdats" [The Science of Winning] (1795-1796). His training and indoctrinational system was based upon the experience of wars and military practice. The methods and forms of war and engagements

employed by him embodied objective laws, principles and rules disclosed by the practice of conducted military campaigns. In assessing the influence of the situation on military operations, Suvorov said that "circumstances change just as weapons change...."(3) And for this reason in each specific situation the military leader should remember that "instantly changing circumstances control matters and these must be controlled by the chief."(4) A general's plan should be compiled "in general terms: the details depend upon the circumstances the master of which he should be."(5) In directing the Russo-Austrian troops in the Italian Campaign of 1799, Suvorov conducted a difficult struggle against the Austrian court bureaucracy, the "cabinet submerged in its ignorance,"(6) the orders of which did not take into account the changes which had occurred in the theater of war and thereby harmed troop actions.

In his generalship activities, Suvorov considered the particular features of the Russian soldier with his dedication to the homeland and the capacity for self-sacrifice. In contrast to the generals of his times, he felt that the main force of the army was the human soldier and not the mechanical soldier specified in the article. For Suvorov, the soldiers were the creators of victories.

The Russian military leader was categorically against speculative theories divorced from life and based upon the negation of a decisive engagement. His strategy, the essence of which was to defeat the enemy in a field engagement, had a decisive, offensive nature. The rapid maneuvers of the troops and the diverse means and forms of armed combat were aimed at a single goal of falling on the enemy by surprise and routing it in a field engagement. "A single minute," said Suvorov, "determines the outcome of a battle, an hour the success of a campaign and a day the fate of empires."(7)

At that time, military art was defined as the art of maneuvering (the English Lloyd) in the aim of wearing down the enemy and avoiding battle by carrying out maneuvers planned with mathematical precision. The Western European generals and military theorists considered geographic points (supply bases) to be the object of action, while Suvorov considered it the enemy army with the defeating of its personnel ensuring the winning of the war. The Western European generals endeavored by maneuvering to constrain the enemy while Suvorov felt that if the enemy was constrained it was a failure while an enemy annihilated or taken prisoner was a success. He considered speed and drive to be a condition of victory and for this reason constantly taught the troops to quickly carry out a march in any season or time of day in diverse terrain, to attack by surprise without a halt, without waiting for the arrival of all the forces: "...The head does not wait for the tail which is always on time...."(8) The enemy which has lost an engagement should be caught by pursuit as "a forest which has not been felled completely will grow again."(9)

Suvorov rejected the old line tactics which did not correspond to the conditions of waging war and employed a new column tactics based upon the decisive, bold and flexible maneuvering, combining fire and bayonet attack with a decisive role for the latter, on the cooperation of all branches of troops and the individual units of the battle formation. Columns combined with an extended order were employed by him for the first time in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774 at Turtukay.

Suvorov skillfully combined strategy and tactics both in preparation and in the course of the engagement. He unswervingly followed the rule of launching the main thrust with concentrated forces; constantly increasing the force of the attack on the crucial sector by an echeloned configuration of the divisions or with the different-time commitment of the individual groups of troops in the aim of diverting enemy forces from the crucial sector and crushing it, launching attack after attack; in the course of the engagement itself to defeat the enemy piecemeal; to carry out a surprise attack by the units of the battle formation (most often the reserves) where the enemy did not expect the attack. The engagement at Rymnik (1790) is an example of the complex maneuvering of troops on the battlefield and the piecemeal destruction of the enemy not by numbers but by skill. The storming of Izmail has gone down in history as a classic example of destroying as numerically superior enemy by outright attack. This method of fighting refuted the theory which existed in Western Europe at that time concerning fortress warfare which came down to a methodical engineer attack.

Victory in battle was achieved by the precise cooperation of the infantry, cavalry, artillery and individual units of the battle formation (divisions, brigades, regiments and battalions); by the skillful combination of bayonet and saber attacks; by the skillful choice of the moment for shifting the infantry from firing to a bayonet attack and the cavalry to attacking the enemy; by continuous artillery support for the attacking troops.

Suvorov employed a differing configuration of troop battle formations including columns, squares as well as an open formation of chasseurs combined with columns and squares and, finally, an open formation three ranks deep. In fighting the French, the chasseurs positioned in an open order were ahead and then came a three-rank extended line and behind it battalion columns (six-rank); the reserve was located in columns, comprising a fourth echelon of the battle formation.

Suvorov's military art reached its greatest perfection in the Italian and Swiss campaigns of 1799, when in the battles on the Adda, Trebbia and at Novi, the Russian troops defeated the most advanced Western European army, the army of the French bourgeois revolution. The French military leaders themselves spoke eloquently about the successes of the Russian Army. In the words of Moreau, the march to the Trebbia was a brilliant work of military art. One of the best French marshals Massena said that "for this alone (Suvorov's Swiss Campaign.--A.S.) he would forfeit all his 48 campaigns." (10) Napoleon, in analyzing the campaign of 1799, recognized the brilliant successes of Suvorov and also that this campaign was fatal for France.

Unfortunately, the authors of the book "Vo slavu Otechestva Rossiyskogo" [To the Glory of the Russian Fatherland] (11) consider the generally accepted assessment of Soviet and foreign historiography as substantially oversimplified, for the main thing did not consist in this (p 238) (not in the "extended line -- column" system.--A.S.). They assert that Suvorov in 1799 kept opposite the French republic troops, as he had in 1794 (in the Polish War) not column tactics ("extended line -- column") but rather line tactics: "...Suvorov's infantry was drawn up in a line.... Suvorov kept the line due

to the fact that it permitted employing the same units for conducting fire and for launching an attack" (p 235).

"...The erroneousess of the views...of military historians," the authors assert, "stems from the fact that the entire question comes down to the changes in the forms of the infantry formation...." They consider the "system of the 'extended order -- column' as the only method for going beyond the limits of line tactics...." (p 244). They then write: "Did Suvorov conceive of the employment of columns as a battle formation combined with a line of battalions? There are no data to judge this. In any event, the combination of columns with a line was not conceived of...." (pp 244-245). In 1799, in the military actions against the French Army, he followed "the path of employing small-arms fire for the fire preparation for the attack" by line battalions and the fire of the guns of regimental artillery. The line three-rank formation in the course of combat could also carry out the task of a bayonet attack (p 245). The cavalry, the authors feel, was employed by Suvorov (as in the armies of the Western European countries), but not in field engagements but rather in storming fortresses (p 240).

In actuality in field battles, Suvorov's troops were formed up in lines of battalion columns and ahead of these was an open order of riflemen and a three-rank line. Such a formation is evidenced in the documents, instructions and orders of Suvorov as well as in numerous observations by contemporaries. For example, in the order to the reserve corps of 1744 and in "Nauka Pobezhdai," Suvorov demanded that the troops be instructed to fight in columns (through two-sided attacks), as he felt that the six-rank column "is more flexible than all the formations, it is quick in movement, almost without a halt, and constantly breaks through." (12) The battalion columns placed in a line increased the attack from in depth. In instructions on the methods of actions in combat (1799) he pointed out: "...The columns rush into the attack with bayonets.... What is not shattered by the first line is finished up by the second...." (13) The outcome of the engagement was determined by the bayonet and saber attacks. The three-rank line inherited from the old line tactics under the conditions of fighting the French republic army could only engage in a bayonet attack but only columns were capable of shattering the enemy, breaking through the front and exploiting the success. In the engagements of the Italian Campaign at Trebbia and Novi, the columns played a crucial role. In Suvorov's instructions of 1779, it directly states: "The second line moves forward in closed ranks keeping its guns on its shoulder behind the first; at a distance of 200 steps, having an interval of 300 steps between battalions." (14) The second line was formed up not in a three-rank line but in columns.

In the Battle of Trebbia, on the sector of the main thrust, a deeply echeloned fist was organized from Bagration's vanguard, Ferster's division located on its left, Shveykovskiy's division which was behind and Frelikh's reserve which was behind these divisions. The divisions were formed up in two lines: in a line of line battalions and a line of battalion columns. In this, as in other engagements, Suvorov assigned a general and a special reserve and brought the maneuvering of troops on the battlefield up to the highest limit. His troops attacked the enemy in columns in the Battle of Novi as well as in the Muten Valley during the Swiss Campaign.

The authors of the book also make mistakes in interpreting individual provisions of the Russian Army manuals, starting from the infantry manual of 1755, where the first mention is made of columns and ending with the 1811 manual. In them the three-rank line was considered not the basis of the battle formation, as the authors assert, but the basis for reforming into columns created from the two- and three-rank lines. The square was formed from the line and from the columns. Such a reorganization was also carried out in the course of the fighting. The 1811 manual states directly that the three-rank line comprised the basis but as a "formation unit." (15)

The assertion by the authors is also incorrect that "the use of a chasseur extended line as the first line of the battle formation which preceded the close formation of the line infantry was not inherent to Suvorov's tactics" (p 239). In actuality, the open order positioned ahead of the square was employed by him also in military operations against the Turks, for example, in 1774 with the first push against Turtukay. In the second thrust against Turtukay, the open order was combined with columns while in the Battle of Kozludzhi, with battalion squares. In the instructions of 9 (20) September 1799, Suvorov wrote: "Only the firm and unswerving support of the column can give courage and bravery to the spread-out riflemen...." (16)

The tactical superiority of modern armies (the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries.--A.S.), wrote Friderich Engels, was in the combining of branches of troops and "three forms of combat -- the open order, the line order (line.--A.S.) and the column." (17) Suvorov organized his troops not in lines (this was the essence of the old line tactics) but in columns combined with a line and extended order. Precisely such a configuration of the troops ensured the drive and rapidity and this determined the essence of Suvorov's new tactics.

The authors of the book consider as erroneous the notion of Suvorov's "Nauka Pobezhdat" that the French troops which "are fighting the Germans and others in columns...by us...must also be beaten with columns." (18) As the basis of their thesis they assert that the documents compiled in the course of the war against France in 1799 supposedly "provide no mention of columns as an order for attack" (p 241) and explain this by the fact that Suvorov in 1799 had a different understanding of French tactics than in 1796 (p 244), since upon his arrival in Italy it was learned that "actually the center of gravity in French tactics lay more in the fire fight of spread-out riflemen than in an attack by columns" (p 245). In the initial version this "was basically the development of the 'fire' tactics and in no way was not close but actually farther...than the old methods of the 18th century" (p 238). In the Italian Campaign of 1799, for the French "characteristic was an extended fire fight of extended orders of riflemen supported from in depth...." (p 255).

All these assertions are clearly refuted by official materials and witnesses of the Italian and Swiss campaigns. The new tactical system which arose in France, wrote F. Engels, since 1795 "had begun to assume a definite form of combining riflemen fighting in an extended order with close columns. Subsequently, a formation in a line was added to this...with the brigades forming two lines and a reserve, but each battalion was formed in a

column...."(19) The new strategy rested on a decisive offensive, on speed and pressure, and on achieving victory in a war with great and decisive engagements.

The revolutionary people of France, wrote V. I. Lenin, "showed...gigantic revolutionary creativity, having recreated the entire system of strategy...and having created, instead of the old troops, a new, revolutionary people's troops and a new conduct of war."(20)

The Russian and French armies, in spite of the assertions by the book's authors, made the transition to the new strategy and tactics not at the beginning of the 19th century (under Napoleon) but during the times of Suvorov and the bourgeois revolution in France (1789-1794). A new period of military art began from this time. The attempt by the authors of the book to consider the generalship art of Suvorov as belonging in the preceding period are based upon an erroneous interpretation of the documentary material, including the Russian military manuals and on the non-recognition of evidence from participants in Suvorov's campaigns. The Decembrist F. N. Glinka wrote that the Russian land "has included in the temple of immortality Suvorov who was never vanquished by anyone.... Napoleon having taken a portion of Suvorov's military rules, particularly his speed and surprise in attacks, skillfully applied these to the great movements of large armies.... This is not disputed either by the French themselves and was recognized also by Napoleon himself; in letters from Egypt captured by the English, he clearly told the Directorate that Suvorov would not be stopped on the path to victory until we had learned his particular art of winning and opposed him with his own rules."(21)

The new theory, wrote A. F. Petrushevskiy in the "Kratkiy obzor suvorovskoy literatury" [Concise Review of Suvorov Literature] (St. Petersburg, 1903), "was adopted by the French out of necessity, as the only means remaining available to them due to the armed Europe; Suvorov adopted and mastered it solely upon the bidding of his military gifts."

D. A. Milyutin, a major researcher of Suvorov's generalship activities in an article about him published in the journal OTECHESTVENNYYE ZAPISKI, No 5, 1839, wrote that Suvorov stood heads above his century and his strategy, his way of action bore the evidence of modern strategy.

The Soviet people esteem the memory of Suvorov. During the Great Patriotic War the image of Generalissimo Suvorov inspired the Soviet military to military feats. In 1942, the Soviet Army struck the Order of Suvorov, and in 1943 established Suvorov schools.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Letter From Suvorov to Bibikov," "Generalissimus Suvorov. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov" [Generalissimo Suvorov. Collection of Documents and Materials], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1947, pp 130-131.
2. Ye. Fuks, "Sobraniye raznykh sochineniy" [Collection of Various Works], St. Petersburg, 1827, p 158.

3. A. V. Suvorov, "Dokumenty" [Documents], Vol III, p 587.
4. Ibid., Vol IV, p 294.
5. Ibid., p 412.
6. Ibid.
7. A. F. Petrushevskiy, "Generalissimus knyaz Suvorov" [Generalissimo Prince Suvorov], St. Petersburg, 2d Edition, 1900, p 531.
8. A. V. Suvorov, "Dokumenty," Vol I, p 649.
9. Ibid., Vol IV, p 106.
10. "Istoriya russkoy armii i flota" [History of the Russian Army and Navy], Moscow, 1911, No 2, p 148.
11. V. A. Zolotarev, M. N. Mezhevich, D. Ye. Skorodumov, "Vo slavu Otechestva Rossiyskogo (Razvitiye voyennoy mysli i voyennogo iskusstva v Rossii vo vtoroy polovine XVIII v.)" [For the Glory of the Russian Fatherland (The Development of Military Thought and Military Art in Russia in the Second Half of the 18th Century)], Moscow, Mysl, 1984.
12. A. V. Suvorov, "Dokumenty," Vol II, p 65.
13. Ibid., Vol IV, pp 13, 14.
14. D. A. Milyutin, "Istoriya voyny 1799 goda mezhdru Rossiyey i Frantsiyey" [History of the War of 1799 Between Russia and France], St. Petersburg, 1857, 2d Edition, Vol III, p 166.
15. "Stoletiye voyennogo ministerstva 1802-1902. Glavnyy shtab. Istoricheskiy ocherk" [The Centennial of the Military Ministry 1802-1902. The Main Staff. Historical Essay], St. Petersburg, 1903, Part 1, Book II, Section III, p 226.
16. A. V. Suvorov, "Dokumenty," Vol IV, p 333.
17. K. Marx and F. Engels, "Soch." [Works], Moscow, Gospolitizdat, Vol 14, p 39.
18. A. V. Suvorov, "Nauka pobezhdat" [The Science of Winning], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1980, p 24.
19. K. Marx and F. Engels, "Soch.," Vol 14, p 376.
20. V. I. Lenin, PSS [Complete Collected Works], Vol 32, p 80.

21. F. Glinka, "Kratkoye nachertaniye voyennogo zhurnala" [A Brief Outline of a Military Journal], St. Petersburg, 1817, p 10.

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DOSAAF YOUTH WORK EXAMINED

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[Article by Lt Gen V. V. Mosyaykin, deputy chairman of the USSR DOSAAF Central Committee: "A Reserve of the Soviet Armed Forces"; the article is written as an analysis of the experience of mass defense work by DOSAAF among the youth]

[Text] The new wording of the CPSU Program approved by the 27th Party Congress states: "The most acute problem confronting mankind is that of the problem of war and peace. Imperialism has been guilty of two world wars which have carried off many-score millions of lives. It has created the threat of a third world war."(1) In considering the complex international situation and the growing aggressiveness of the imperialist circles, the party has paid unflagging attention to strengthening the defense might of the USSR, to increasing its security and the readiness of the Armed Forces to defeat any aggressor.

In being guided by the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress, the All-Union Volunteer Society for Assisting the Army, Aviation and Navy, the USSR DOSAAF, is endeavoring to increase its contribution to the cause of strengthening the military might of the Armed Forces. DOSAAF has concentrated its efforts on improving mass defense work, party political indoctrination, and improving the preparation of youth to carry out their military duty. In carrying out these tasks of major political and state importance, the committees of the volunteer society have rich experience gained in almost 60 years of their activity.

Established in 1927, the Soviet for Assisting Defense, Aviation and Chemical Construction (Osoaviakhim)(2) initiated active work to propagandize and carry out Lenin's ideas concerning the defense of the socialist fatherland and indoctrinate the workers and youth in a spirit of Soviet patriotism and a readiness with weapons in hand to defend the independence of the USSR. Having become centers for political and military-technical training of inductees and aviation personnel, the Osoaviakhim organizations adopted energetic measures to develop shooting and other paramilitary types of sports. In the towns and villages formations for air and antichemical defense and chemical detachments were established and underwent training. Over the years the defense society was turned into a truly mass organization corresponding to the sociopolitical, scientific-technical and economic changes which occurred in the Soviet nation.

Prior to the Great Patriotic War, the Osoaviakhim committees and activists intensified the search for effective forms for the mass training of workers in military affairs. Military knowledge circles and youth camps were set up everywhere. In these the workers, white collar personnel, peasants and students mastered small arms, they learned the principles of tactics as well as artillery weapons, hand grenades, the design of tanks and armored vehicles and the means for defense against chemical weapons. Mass military patriotic measures were carried out in the labor collectives, the rayons and oblasts such as weeks and 10 days of defense work, the collecting of money into the national defense fund, air trips, motor boating, sailing and other paramilitary excursions. Thousands of persons wore with pride the insignias "Voroshilov Shooters," "Ready for PVKhO [Air and Antichemical Defense]," "For Active Defense Work." By the start of the war, millions of Soviet people had undergone schooling in courage and patriotism in the defense society organizations.

On the very first day of the treacherous attack by Nazi Germany on the USSR, the Osoaviakhim Central Council approved a decree which obliged all the society's organizations to work according to wartime demands and to give maximum aid to the front and rear. The defense society committees took an active part in preparing volunteer formations, fighter detachments, worker and communist battalions, people's militia regiments and divisions and partisan detachments. They took a direct part in setting up military training centers. At enterprises, institutions and residential buildings, the Osoaviakhim members supervised blackout measures, they participated in eliminating the consequences of enemy air raids and provided first aid to the victims and served in maintaining order.

Over the incomplete 4 war years, the organizations of the defense society trained several million persons in military specialties, including thousands of machine gunners, signal troops, pilots and many other military specialties. The following fact eloquently shows the high quality of training for the defenders of the socialist fatherland. During the war over 2,000 military pilots received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. Of these, around 1,000 received their basic flight training in the Osoaviakhim air clubs.(3) Everyone from small to great knows the names in our nation of Aleksandr Pokryshkin, Ivan Kozhedub, Aleksandr Matrosov, Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, Nuren Abdirov and Vasiliy Zaytsev. They were all schooled in the defense society. In 1947, by an ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Osoaviakhim was awarded the Order of the Red Banner for successful work in the area of strengthening national defense and on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the day of its formation.

In subsequent years, the glorious traditions of Osoaviakhim were continued by DOSAAF. The Decree of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers of 7 May 1966 "On the State and Measures to Improve the Work of the All-Union Volunteer Society for Assisting the Army, Aviation and Navy (USSR DOSAAF)" became the fundamental document for the defense society and was for an extended period the program for its activities. In carrying out the party and government instructions, the organizations of the defense society under the leadership of the local party and soviet bodies steadily increased the

effectiveness of the military-patriotic indoctrination of the workers and the quality of preparing the youth for service in the army and the personnel of mass technical professions for the national economy. DOSAAF training centers were established at enterprises, on sovkhozes and kolkhozes for preparing the youth for service in the army. The network of DOSAAF clubs and schools was expanded, their training facilities were strengthened, the skill level of the faculty and the masters of production training was increased and the technical and paramilitary types of sports underwent broader development.

The successes of the defense society and its popularity among the people increased. The USSR DOSAAF has become one of the most mass social organizations of the nation. By 1977, there were around 80 million members in its ranks.(4) In 1977, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet awarded DOSAAF the Order of Lenin for a major contribution to developing mass defense work and for preparing the workers to defend the socialist fatherland.

A major stage in the further advance of military patriotic and mass defense work was the 9th All-Union DOSAAF Congress held in February 1983. The congress delegates and all members of the multimillion Soviet warmly received the greetings of the CPSU Central Committee which, in particular, stated: "The duty of the DOSAAF organizations is to improve mass defense work, military patriotic indoctrination and the propagandizing of military knowledge among the population. They should improve the quality of specialist training for the Armed Forces and the personnel of the mass technical professions for the national economy and ensure the further development of the technical and paramilitary types of sports."(5)

In carrying out the party order and the decisions of the 9th DOSAAF Congress, the primary organizations of the defense society did a good deal to ensure the unbreakable unity of patriotic and international indoctrination of the DOSAAF members, the training of them in the principles of military affairs and the active involvement in technical and paramilitary types of sports.

The effectiveness of this work increased during the period of preparing for and celebrating the 40th anniversary of the victory of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War. Thus, in 1985, the all-Union patriotic campaign "Equaling the Banners of Victory!" was carried out. The USSR DOSAAF Central Committee and other organizations took an active part in organizing it. Hundreds of war-scarred colors under which Soviet soldiers had fought heroically against Nazi invaders toured many republics, krais and oblasts. The colors were carried at meetings, rallies, solemn assemblies and special-subject evenings. As an example, the standards of military units which had received the designator of Brest were carried through all the rayons of this oblast and were present at many primary DOSAAF organizations and schools of the defense society where inductees were gaining a military specialty. The combat relics profoundly stirred both the persons of the older generations as well as the youth.

The decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress and the program documents adopted at it have brought about a nationwide upsurge. The Soviet people, including the members of the multimillion defense society, are fully determined to successfully carry out the plans for the socioeconomic development of the

USSR. The DOSAAF members have accepted as a combat mission the thesis voiced in the new wording of the CPSU Program that each communist and every Soviet person must do everything within his power to maintain the nation's defense capability on the proper level.

In the course of the socialist competition to properly celebrate the 27th Party Congress and carry its decisions out, the role of the primary, rayon and oblast DOSAAF organizations has increased noticeably and their cooperation has improved with the commanders and political bodies of the units, ships and formations, the trade unions, the Komsomol, the Znaniye [Knowledge] Society, the military commissariats and the Civil Defense staffs, the Soviet War Veterans Committee and other state and social organizations. There has been a further improvement and development in such measures as the months and weeks of mass defense work, the all-Union Komsomol and youth hikes to the sites of revolutionary, military and labor glory of the CPSU and the Soviet people, all-Union memory watches and revolutionary glory weeks, the all-Union exploratory expeditions "Chronicle of the Great Patriotic War" and military-sports games such as Zarnitsa [Summer Lightning] and Orlenok [Eaglet]. Everywhere it has become a practice where the plans for political indoctrination of the enterprises, kolkhozes, sovkhoses, rayons, cities, oblasts and krays include measures which are directly organized and carried out by the DOSAAF activists. The activities of the DOSAAF organizations, having become an inseparable part of the sociopolitical life of the labor collectives, help to carry out socioeconomic and defense tasks.

True creativity and farsightedness in improving military patriotic work have been shown, for example, by the CPSU Gorkom and the executive committee of the soviet in the town of Kuznetsk of Penza Oblast. Here they have worked out a long-range, comprehensive plan which includes both an improvement in the forms and methods of military patriotic indoctrination of the workers, the students of the technical schools, SPTU [rural vocational-technical school] and secondary schools as well as an increase in the necessary physical plant. In carrying out this plan, the town workers have erected a memorial to those who fell during the years of the Great Patriotic War, the Hill of Military Glory. It has become the site of many stirring events. Here the different generations of Kuznetsk residents meet, from here inductees leave for the army with a bit of their homeland, here they hold the parades of the Pioneer detachments and the senior graders stand an honor watch.

Following the example of the city party committee, long-range plans for military patriotic work have been drawn up at all enterprises and institutions of learning of Kuznetsk. In these a major role has been assigned to the primary DOSAAF organizations. Museums and corners of labor and military glory have been organized at the plants and factories, the best places on their territory have been assigned for monuments and obelisks honoring fellow countrymen who have given up their life for the freedom and independence of the motherland. Their names have been carved on slabs. These places have become truly sacred. Various ceremonial measures are conducted here such as initiation as workers, and inductees leave from here to the military commandant assembly point.

The physical plant of the DOSAAF organizations in Kuznetsk is also being improved. Over a period of 5 years, here they have built nine shooting ranges and a city-wide range. At present, all secondary schools, SPTU, technical schools and schools in the town have good opportunities for the development of sports shooting. A majority of the primary DOSAAF organizations at the schools has paramilitary obstacle courses making it possible to qualitatively improve the training of the young men for army service. Hundreds of young men study in the circles and sports sections.

At a session of the bureau of the CPSU Gorkom each year they examine the question of the results of training inductees for army service. Here they carefully analyze the contribution of the DOSAAF organizations to indoctrinating a love for the motherland and the homeland in the young men, as well as developing their necessary moral-political and psychological qualities, skills and abilities as well as strong physical conditioning.

The comprehensive approach in organizing military patriotic work in the town has produced good results. In recent years, all inductees from Kuznetsk have received a technical specialty and sports rating before departing for the army. They have carried out their constitutional duty of defending the socialist fatherland with dignity and honor. This can be seen from the fact that 16 men from Kuznetsk returned from the army with state decorations.

Many other cities, rayons, oblasts and krays of the nation give close attention to further improving military patriotic indoctrination. This work is being carried out in the most planned and purposeful manner by the DOSAAF organizations of Belorussia and the Ukraine as well as Bryansk and Kuybyshev Oblasts. The drive for a comprehensive execution of indoctrinational tasks and improving the effectiveness of the organizational work done by the DOSAAF committees is the most important.

Increased effectiveness of military patriotic indoctrination of the inductee and pre-inductee youth is the aim of the measures carried out annually within the month of mass defense work on the eve of Soviet Army and Navy Day. Many DOSAAF committees, schools and clubs take an active part in the Lenin and sociopolitical lectures, in the work of military patriotic clubs and lecture series and they hold solemn rituals by the monuments of glory and memorial complexes. The future soldier clubs, the military patriotic associations and the defense-sports camps have proven effective and here the youth study the principles of military affairs and take an active part in technical and paramilitary types of sports. The role of DOSAAF is growing in the patriotic movement to collect materials on frontline veterans, to provide help to war disabled and to establishing monumental complexes, memorial monuments and signs perpetuating the heroic feat of the peoples in the struggle for the liberty and independence of our country. The indoctrinational significance of these measures is that they help the youth not only become familiar with the glorious past of the motherland but also arouse their desire to make a specific contribution to strengthening the economic and defense might of the fatherland.

The public aktiv plays an important role in the military patriotic indoctrination of the youth. Under a majority of the DOSAAF committees there

are successfully operating volunteer departments, permanent commissions, educational councils and lecture groups. These employ many veterans of the party, the war and labor as well as reserve and retired officers.

In carrying out the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress, the USSR DOSAAF Central Committee and the DOSAAF committees are taking energetic measures to make the primary organizations true centers of military patriotic indoctrination of the Soviet people and for readying the youth for service in the Armed Forces. For this purpose, many DOSAAF activists each year take special courses, the physical plant of the defense society is improved as well as the forms of work of its collectives. This makes it possible to improve the link between labor, ideological-political and moral indoctrination of the Soviet people.

A major area of mass defense work is the immediate preparation of the youth for service in the Soviet Army and Navy. A majority of our schools and air clubs is located in well-equipped buildings and they have a modern training plant, driving ranges, radio and radar ranges, specialized classrooms and programmed instruction classrooms, trainer facilities, laboratories for practical work, garages, shops and maintenance stations. Many training organizations in terms of their technical level and the level of the educational-indoctrinational process are close to specialized secondary schools. Among these one could put the Taganrog and Alma-Ata Motor Vehicle Schools, the Kiev, Riga and Tashkent Naval Schools, the Krasnodar and Kuybyshev Radio-Technical Schools and the Third Moscow Air Club.

As an example, the Khmel'nitskiy DOSAAF Model Naval School trains knowledgeable and able specialists for the Navy. Here virtually all the exercises and drills are conducted under conditions close to shipboard. Some 90 percent of the training area at the school has been given over to ranges, classrooms for the actual development of the skills involved in maintaining, tuning and training combat employment of ship equipment and weapons. Life shows that the graduates of this school worthily carry out their military duty.

In the socialist competition in honor of the 27th CPSU Congress, over 100 DOSAAF schools won the honorary right to be named model. In these and other training organizations of the defense society much is being done to further improve political indoctrination. The ideological and organizational level of the political exercises, political information sessions and mass military patriotic measures is being improved, talks are held systematically on Lenin's legacy, the demands of the USSR Constitution to defend the socialist fatherland as well as on the unflagging activity of the CPSU to strengthen the nation's defense capability; sponsorship ties with the units and ships are being widened. Meetings with veterans of the Great Patriotic War and the Armed Forces, special-subject evenings and military patriotic films have a great emotional impact among the inductees. In the course of the training process, the inductees come to understand the tasks of the Armed Forces and the social meaning and significance of military service; they are prepared ahead of time for Army and Navy life.

All indoctrinational work in the DOSAAF training organizations is aimed at developing in the future soldiers feelings of love for the motherland, pride

for belonging to the Soviet Armed Forces and a readiness to honorably carry out one's patriotic and international duty. The efforts of the masters of production training, the instructors, the deputies and chiefs of the schools and the DOSAAF activists have brought good results. One out of every three inductees today receives his basic military training in the DOSAAF training organization, and due to this they shape up quickly and in a minimum time become class specialists and outstanding men in military and political training.

For example, the young Baltic sailor, PO 1st Class S. Smoliiy, has won great respect among his fellow servicemen and commanders. Two years ago, he finished naval school with outstanding indicators. Soon after his arrival on the ship, the DOSAAF graduate headed an engineer department and won the right to be called best specialist. A year passed. The communist showed him great confidence having admitted him as a candidate party member. This example is typical as is confirmed by numerous letters of thanks received by the schools from the troop units.

The replenishing of reserves for the Armed Forces is also aided by that great work which the DOSAAF organizations carry out in the area of training personnel for mass technical professions for the national economy and of paramilitary significance. Each year more than 2 million persons undergo technical training in the defense society. The profession of driver of a means of transport is the most mass one. Specialists trained at DOSAAF are working successfully in industry and in transportation, on the BAM [Baykal-Amur Mainline], at the Tyumen oil fields and in the Nonchernozem Zone of the USSR. Each enterprise, kolkhoz or sovkhoz employs drivers, tractor operators, crane operators, mechanics, electricians, and radio repairmen who completed the DOSAAF schools or courses. This form is the most mass and most effective for disseminating technical knowledge among the population.

DOSAAF has rich experience and glorious traditions in the development of the technical and paramilitary types of sports which arm the future soldiers with technical and military knowledge and help to develop in them high moral-combat qualities and good physical conditioning. In recent years, the geography of aviation, motor vehicle, motorcycle, motor boating, radio-technical and other types of sports has broadened significantly. For instance, more and more of the inductee and pre-inductee youth of Belorussia, Bryansk and Penza Oblasts participate in competitions for paramilitary all-round combined tournament, the paramilitary cross-country race, the paramilitary obstacle course and precision motor vehicle driving. These types of sports make it possible for the young men to obtain good preparation for service in the Army and Navy.

An important role in the development of the future soldiers is played by the circles and sections sponsored in the DOSAAF sports-technical clubs and in the DOSAAF organizations of the enterprises, sovkhozes, kolkhozes and schools. Definite changes for the better have been noticed in the development of sports defense work at the place of residence. For example, in Minsk and Penza sports technical clubs and sections as well as technical circles under the housing administrations and houses of culture have been established. Latvia and Lithuania are introducing interesting forms of involving the workers of kolkhozes and sovkhozes in exercises for the technical types of sports. Thus,

on Marupe Kolkhoz in Latvia, more than 100 young men are involved in motorcycle and motor vehicle sports, shooting and paramilitary all-round combined tournament.

Very popular are the children and youth sports-technical schools which have been set up by the DOSAAF committees together with the trade unions. Over 100,000 young men and women are participating in them.

Necessary and correct, in our view, is the decision of the DOSAAF Central Committee to involve youth of an earlier age in the technical and paramilitary types of sports. For example, juveniles 14 years of age are permitted to participate in competitions in the class of 125 cubic cm motorcycles and on mopeds. The age has been lowered for admission to air clubs and air sports clubs for parachute and flying specialties, respectively, to 15 and 16 years. This has made it possible to increase the number of young persons receiving aviation training in DOSAAF by 10-15 percent.

The DOSAAF organizations are seeking out new reserves in work to carry out the Decree of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers "On Further Increasing the Mass Nature of Physical Culture and Sports." We have begun to hold more frequently contests for summer and winter all-round combined tournaments for GIO [Ready for Labor and Defense], as well as spartaciads for school children and pre-induction youth. Last year the first all-Union and first all-Russian youth sports games were successfully concluded and their program included technical and paramilitary types of sports.

All the above-listed forms of mass sports work make it possible for the youth to obtain technical knowledge and skills and instill in themselves a feeling of collectivism and the capacity to surmount great physical and psychological stresses. Many young men leave for the army as masters and candidate masters of Soviet sports as well as rated athletes. Among them were Aleksey Ishutin, Boris Klyushnikov, Igor Chermashentsev and Ivan Gerasimenko. They all later became outstanding men in military and political training. Returning after discharge into the reserves to the sports-technical clubs, the former soldiers have successfully defended the honor of the composite Soviet team for sports motor boating at international matches. In 1985, Aleksey Ishutin became a world champion and Boris Klyushnikov an European champion.

DOSAAF is proud of the fact that among the Heroes of the Soviet Union who received this high title for feats committed in carrying out their international duty in Afghanistan were the DOSAAF graduates Lt Cols Vasiliy Shcherbakov and Yuriy Kuznetsov, Capt Nabi Akramov; the Order of Lenin was awarded to the former Sgt Aleksandr Novak, the Orders of the Red Star to the twin brothers Aleksandr and Andrey Kamolov and many other men received a state decoration.

The more effective work of DOSAAF has been aided by the constant aid it has received from the USSR Ministry of Defense and the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy. The command, the political directorates of the districts and fleets provide modern equipment for the DOSAAF schools and assist in further improving their training facilities. The inductees are permitted to visit the units and become acquainted with the life and combat

training of the soldiers, sergeants and officers. For example, many young men from Murmansk visit the ships of the Red Banner Northern Fleet and meet the sailors. Such measures help the young men to prepare better for carrying out their military duty.

At the same time, there still are shortcomings in the work of DOSAAF in preparing the youth for army service. This applies particularly to the level of the practical training of the inductees as well as their psychological and physical conditioning. The reasons for such a state of affairs are that certain DOSAAF committees little consider the increased demands upon a man of the Armed Forces, they conduct military patriotic work formally in focusing basically only on the number of measures. The increased capabilities of the training facilities are not fully utilized and because of this during the exercises and drills at training centers a situation is not created making it possible to develop the necessary moral and combat qualities in the future soldiers. These and other flaws have occurred at a number of DOSAAF schools in the Udmurt and Kalmyk ASSRs, Ryazan and Kirov Oblasts. Of course, such a situation cannot be tolerated. The ideas of the 27th CPSU Congress oblige us to work with more initiative, with greater intensity and results.

In light of the congress demands, at the Fifth Plenum of the USSR DOSAAF Central Committee held in April, specific measures were outlined to eliminate in the DOSAAF committees formalism and didacticism in the military-patriotic and mass defense work with the youth, inertia, the appearance of business and attempts to embellish the true state of affairs. In the forefront are the questions of increasing exactingness and self-criticalness, the clear realization of the principle of collectivism in leadership and stronger control over the carrying out of adopted decisions and the recruitment and placement of personnel.

The activities of the DOSAAF committees are subordinate to the actual resolution of these questions. They see their duty in being on the level of the party's requirements and making a worthy contribution to the further improving of the military patriotic indoctrination of the youth, improving the quality of training young men for service in the USSR Armed Forces and strengthening the defense might of the fatherland.

FOOTNOTES

1. PRAVDA, 7 March 1986.
2. "Voyenny entsiklopedicheskiy slovar" [Military Encyclopedic Dictionary], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, p 525.
3. "Krasnoznamennoye oboronnoye" [Red Banner Defense Society], Moscow, Izd-vo DOSAAF, 1975, p 132.

4. "Sovetskaya voyennaya entsiklopediya" [Soviet Military Encyclopedia], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 3, 1977, p 256.
5. PRAVDA, 17 February 1983.

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THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES AT A NEW STAGE

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, July 86 (signed to press 25 Jun 86) pp 80-82

[Review by Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, Lt Gen Avn V. V. Serebryannikov of the book "Sovetskiye Vooruzhennyye Sily v usloviyakh razvitogo sotsializma" (The Soviet Armed Forces Under the Conditions of Developed Socialism), edited by Adm A. I. Sorokin, Moscow, Nauka, 1985 and published under the rubric "Criticism and Bibliography"]

[Text] Under present-day conditions there has been a substantial increase in the social role played by the Soviet Armed Forces as the main weapon for secure defense of socialism, for restraining aggressors and for preventing a new war. In this context there is a greater need to profoundly analyze, establish and forecast the ways of further improving the Army and Navy. Among the scientific research in this area, a worthy place is held by the collective work by scientists from the Military History Institute of the USSR Ministry of Defense "Sovetskiye Vooruzhennyye Sily v usloviyakh razvitogo sotsializma" [The Soviet Armed Forces Under the Conditions of Developed Socialism] under the overall editorship of Adm A. I. Sorokin.

The book is marked by generalizations which are vast in nature and it clearly sets out the Marxist-Leninist concept of the socialist army, in operating as a component part of the teachings concerning the defense of socialism and being a dependable theoretical basis in the activities of the CPSU in resolving the problems of military organizational development. The authors have concentrated chief attention on examining the further development of this concept in the CPSU documents and in the speeches by the leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet state.

The book emphasizes that the necessity of increasing the combat might of the Soviet Armed Forces has been brought about by external circumstances, that is, by the greater aggressiveness of imperialism, particularly American, which, in essence, ignores the peace-loving initiatives of the USSR, is continuing the arms race and is fanning hostility toward socialism. "From the viewpoint of domestic conditions, our society does not require an army," states the new edition of the CPSU Program. "However, as long as the danger of the unleashing of aggressive wars and military conflicts by imperialism, the party will pay unflagging attention to strengthening the defense might of the USSR,

to reinforcing its security and the readiness of the Armed Forces to defeat any aggressor."(1)

The book shows the activities of the Communist Party and the Soviet state in ensuring a secure defense of the victories of socialism, including: strengthening the nation's defense capability (increasing the military-economic potential, the military patriotic indoctrination of the entire people and the establishing of mobilization supplies), increasing the combat might and readiness of the Armed Forces, the active fight for peace and the strengthening of the state security bodies in the aim of preventing subversive activities by enemy agents and imperialist intelligence. The Armed Forces are the main weapon for defending socialism and the embodiment of the state's defense might and for this reason the party, government and all the people focus attention on their strengthening and development.

The book examines in detail the question of broadening the external function of our Armed Forces which consists in: the armed defense of the socialist motherland against aggressor attack, defense of the entire socialist commonwealth and each state within this commonwealth together with the other fraternal armies, assistance to the peoples of the liberated states upon their request in strengthening defense capability and protecting peace throughout the world. The Armed Forces carry out this function, on the one hand, potentially by their combat might, by the high level of combat readiness, by the appropriate disposition of troops and naval forces and, on the other, by constant readiness to directly employ weapons against the aggressor (p 29).

The book thoroughly shows the development of the army as our society has advanced. The entry of the USSR into the stage of developed socialism, the great achievements in the area of economics, social relations and culture as well as the further shaping of the new man have brought about a change in the sociopolitical nature and traits of our army. From an army of the dictatorship of the proletariat it has become the army of a socialist state of all the people, combining in itself democracy and a strict class nature, in being based on a broad social foundation which is the new historical community of the Soviet people.

The establishing and disclosure of the class nature of the democratic Armed Forces are rightly viewed as a significant achievement of military theoretical thought, for in the not distant past the class and general democratic nature of our army in individual publications were frequently put into opposition and considered to be incompatible (p 39).

The authors using rich factual material show the achievements in strengthening the sociopolitical bases in the defense capability of the Soviet state and the combat might of the Armed Forces. The social, ideological-political and moral unity of Soviet society, in developing as a result of the construction of socialism, is a completely new historical phenomenon inherent solely to socialism and having no analogs in the past as well as being impossible under capitalist conditions. This is one of the most important sources for the moral and political superiority of our army.

The book shows how the spiritual bases of the nation's defense capability have developed and grown stronger. Due to the enormous efforts of the party, a scientific ideology has become firmly established in the spiritual life of Soviet society with the basis being Marxism-Leninism as an integral and ordered system of philosophical, economic and sociopolitical knowledge. The spiritual make-up of the Soviet people is characterized by high ideological loyalty, dedication to the cause of communism, a developed sense of Soviet patriotism and proletarian, socialist internationalism as well as by a conscientious attitude toward labor. Becoming evermore effective is the party's work in the area of military patriotic indoctrination and developing in all Soviet people a readiness to defend the socialist fatherland and to dedicate to this all one's forces and, if need be, one's life.

The generally interesting and informative work is not devoid of certain shortcomings. For example, the authors have not disclosed the mechanism for utilizing the sources of defense might and, in particular, have not shown the positive experience in the activities of commanders, political bodies, party and Komsomol organizations in utilizing the nation's increasing capabilities for raising combat readiness and improving all the life and activities of the troops. In this context, the reader may gain the impression that these sources operate automatically.

After examining the sources of the combat might of the Armed Forces, the authors, in our view, successfully treat the leadership of them by the CPSU. "With the leading role of the party," the new edition of the CPSU Program points out, "policy in the area of national defense and security are worked out and implemented as well as Soviet military doctrine which has a strictly defensive nature and is aimed at defense from attack from outside."(2)

Along with the generalization and development of already known theses concerning Soviet military doctrine, the authors concentrate attention on aspects of the content of military doctrinal views which have not been sufficiently elaborated and not analyzed uniformly in the literature. In particular, the necessity is established of incorporating in military doctrine the views concerning the methods of conducting economic, ideological and diplomatic efforts under wartime conditions as well as the use of all means of policy, including the armed forces, for preventing a new world war and the aggressive local wars of imperialism (p 136).

The book gives great attention to the questions to the training of officer personnel, the improving of the style of their activities, the development of their feeling of responsibility, initiative and creativity, irreproachable discipline and example in carrying out military duty and the achieving of unbreakable unity between the commanders, the superiors and the personnel.

Thoroughly shown is the growing significance of improving the quality of party political work. All the many years' experience of Soviet military organizational development shows that the successful leadership of the Armed Forces by the CPSU is directly dependent upon activating the work of the political bodies, the army and navy party organizations which carry out party policy directly in the troops and in the soldier masses. This most important lesson of history was reinforced and developed in the new edition of the Party

Program which points out: "The CPSU considers it necessary to further strengthen its organizing and directing influence on the life and activities of the Armed Forces, to reinforce one-man command, to increase the role and influence of the political bodies and party organizations of the Soviet Army and Navy and to see to it that the vital tie of the army with the people becomes even stronger." (3)

In the work a major place has been given over to disclosing the specific ways for raising the level of activity of the political bodies and party organizations in accord with the present demands of the CPSU, the instituting of a truly Leninist work style and ensuring the vanguard role of the communists. The activities of the political bodies and party organizations in ensuring the vanguard role of the communists are presented in an interesting manner: the struggle for the strict observance of the CPSU By-Laws and the standards of party life, the publicizing of the results of the activities and conduct of the communists, supervision and checking their actual fulfillment of party and official duties, a vital tie with people and the ability to lead them.

The authors show an interesting innovative approach to examining the problem of the place and role of the Soviet Armed Forces in the system of international military-political relations. The reader will find much that is new about the military-political relations of the Soviet Union and its Armed Forces with the socialist states and their armies, as well as with the developing and capitalist countries and their armed forces. The areas of joint activity of the socialist commonwealth countries in maintaining a military-strategic equilibrium with the states of the aggressive NATO bloc are thoroughly analyzed. The military-political relations between the USSR and the capitalist states in terms of the degree of their acuteness and tension are divided by the authors into three types: a state of war, on the level of a dangerous confrontation and detente. We feel that these relations should have been described under the conditions of the future instituting of principles of peaceful coexistence which presupposes the abandoning of war and any military coercion in relations between states with different systems. This would give the book a more well-balanced prognostic ring.

We would also like to mention certain other shortcomings in the work. The reader of the book, we feel, has the right to hope that he will find something new on such a major characteristic of our Armed Forces as their combat potential which, as is known, is the most generalized, concentrated and all-inclusive indicator for the combat capability of the army and navy in terms of present-day conditions. Unfortunately, this was not an object of close attention in the given book. In accord with the party's ideas of reform (incidentally, this term is not mentioned in the book), the authors should have taken a sharper look at the questions of training and indoctrination, party political work and the socialist competition in the troops.

As a whole, the reviewed work enriches the scientific notions of the state, trends and prospects for an improvement in the Soviet Armed Forces. It will be a good aid for improving the military theoretical training of officer personnel, the military patriotic indoctrination of the Army and Navy personnel and the workers and will provide a definite impetus for working out

a number of questions concerning the development of the Armed Forces at the new stage.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Programma KPSS: Novaya redaktsiya" [CPSU Program: New Edition], Moscow, Politizdat, 1986, p 49.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp 49-50.

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HUNGARIAN MILITARY HISTORY

Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 7, July 86 (signed to press 25 Jun 86) pp 83-84

[Review by Candidate of Historical Sciences, Col V. I. Fomin of the book "Magyarország hadtörténete" (Hungarian Military History), Budapest, Vols 1 and 2, 1984, 1985]

[Text] Such is the title [Hungarian Military History] of the work published in Hungary concerning the history of wars and the development of military affairs in Hungary since antiquity up to the present. Participating in its writing were prominent specialists in the area of military history and co-workers from the Military History Institute and Museum of the Hungarian People's Army. The work of preparing the publication was carried out under the over-all editorship of Candidate of Historical Sciences, E. Liptai. The two-volume work with a total of over 170 printer's pages is attractively illustrated and comes with extensive auxiliary scientific information. Due to the timeliness of the subject and to the high scientific and publishing level, the work has evoked great interest among a broad circle of readers.

It should be emphasized that this is the first attempt in Hungary to establish an interdisciplinary work on a Marxist-Leninist basis devoted to the nation's military history. In utilizing the dialectical materialistic method and in examining events and facts from class positions, the authors give great attention to the recent period of Hungarian military history and show the military cooperation of the Hungarian internationalists with the men of the Soviet Army in the struggle against a common enemy. In disclosing the history of the genesis of a new type of army, they proceed from Lenin's thesis that any revolution is only worth something if it can defend itself.

Since the two-volume "Hungarian Military History" has been published in Hungarian, in our view it would be advisable first of all to briefly familiarize the Soviet reader with its contents.

The first volume begins with a description of the development of military affairs in Hungary from the moment of the "acquisition" of its territory by the union of Hungarian nomadic tribes (9th century). The work then describes the military organization of the early Hungarian feudal state and the wars which it waged before and after the invasion of the tatar mongols (13th-14th

centuries). The book assigns a significant place to the wars of the feudal Hungarian army as well as to the changes which occurred in it with the fall of the medieval state (14th-16th centuries). The volume also analyzes the Peasant War of 1514 under the leadership of D. Dozsa. In critically assessing the consequences of the fierce suppression of the actions of the peasantry, the authors correctly point out that the fear of the feudal lords when confronted with an armed people became one of the chief reasons for the defeat of the royal mercenary troops in an engagement against the Turkish invaders at Mohacs in 1526. The chapters on the unstinting struggle of the Hungarian people for freedom and independence particularly emphasize the role of such military leaders as Bocskay, Bethlen and Rakoczy.

In examining the course of the liberation war of the Hungarian people of 1703-1711 and the balance of forces in the various stages of the struggle against Austrian conquerors, the authors disclose the reasons for its failure. In Hungarian military history literature for the first time the circumstances are fully set out for the reason that Rakoczy II was kept ignorant by the representatives of the Hungarian aristocracy of the Szatmar Peace with the Austrian court.

The sixth chapter of the first volume examines the basic areas in the development of military affairs in Hungary and the influence on it of the French Revolution of 1793. This chapter also brings the reader to the military events of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Hungary in 1848-1849. The following chapter is devoted to these. Chronologically it is divided into five periods. Each of them gives a vivid picture of the unstinting struggle of the rebel soldiers against the superior forces of the international reaction and brings out the particular features of the strategy and tactics in the fighting of the people's revolutionary army.

The concluding, eighth chapter of the volume is an epilog of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-1849. In speaking about a new plan for an armed insurrection by the Hungarian patriots, their revolutionary activities overseas, their active involvement in the struggle against foreign invaders under the banners of Geribaldi in Italy as well as in the Civil War in North America, the authors show the insurmountable strength of the revolutionary process in which the Hungarian working class was already actively involved.

In the second volume which covers the period from the second half of the last century up to the present, this idea undergoes further development. The book commences with an analysis of the situation in the country during the period of the policy of Hapsburg absolutism (1849-1867), an examination of the military organization of the Austrian empire, and a disclosure of the reasons for the defeats of its army in aggressive wars. In analyzing military policy from the period of the Dual Monarchy (1867-1914), the principles for the organizing of the Austro-Hungarian Army are set out and its participation in the wars on the eve of the world imperialist war of 1914-1918 is described. Two-thirds of the chapter are devoted to an analysis of the imperialist war. In examining the war by campaigns, the authors take up in detail the engagements in which the Hungarian soldiers were involved, playing, as they correctly point out, the unenviable role of "cannon fodder."

The book devotes significant space to the military involvement of Hungarian internationalists in the Great October Socialist Revolution and the Civil War in the USSR. The author of the chapter has shown their heroism and self-sacrifice in the struggle for Soviet power in Russia and has disclosed the military and political importance of the feat of the brothers in class and arms.

In the chapter entitled "The Army in the Revolutions of 1918 and 1919. The Patriotic War of the Hungarian Soviet Republic" on a documentary base fully discloses the heroic struggle of the Hungarian proletariat against the combined forces of international imperialism in the spring and summer of 1919 and brings out the particular features of the organization and military art of the Red Army of the Hungarian Soviet Republic.

The history of the Horthy Army and its participation in the war against the USSR are taken up in the fourth chapter. It brings out the reasons for the defeats of the Hungarian troops on the Soviet-German Front and the military disaster which resulted from the antipopular course of the ruling circles who acted in close alliance with Nazi Germany.

The book gives a great deal of space to the involvement of the finest sons of the Hungarian people in the domestic and European anti-Nazi movement on the eve of and during the years of World War II.

The final chapter is devoted to the history of the Hungarian People's Army: its first formations established during the days of World War II, and to the organizational development of the Hungarian People's Army in the postwar years. Having divided the 40-year development of the Hungarian People's Army into four periods, the authors examine in detail the problems resolved in each of these by the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party and by the government of Hungary in the area of military organizational development.

Certainly in a large work it is hard to achieve equal balance for the chapters and sections. There are also individual shortcomings. But these do not determine the main thing in the fundamental work and even a brief acquaintance with this is of great interest for Soviet military historians.

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FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE CENTRAL ARCHIVES

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[Article by Cols I. V. Yaroshenko and V. R. Zhuravlev]

[Text] 2 July 1986 marked the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense (TsAMO SSSR). Its history runs from a archives section of the office of the People's Commissariat of Defense established in 1936 for storing archival documents of the central directorates of the People's Commissariat of Defense. Prior to the start of the Great Patriotic War it had over 200,000 files.

During the period of the Great Patriotic War, the archives section was located in Buzuluk of Orenburg Oblast. From August 1941, it also began receiving and storing documents received from the operational army. In old warehouse facilities unadapted for extended storage of the documents, without heating and electric light, a small collective from the section over the war years received and provided safekeeping for over 3 million files.

After the end of the Great Patriotic War, the receipt of archival materials by the section increased sharply. In 1946, the archives section was relocated to the town of Podolsk and housed in the buildings of a former military school. In July 1947, it was transformed into the Archives of the Ministry of the USSR Armed Forces and on 15 November 1975, into the Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense. At present, it is the largest repository in the USSR of military documents with over 18 million archival files.

The large amount of documents received by the archives during the period of the Great Patriotic War and the first postwar years confronted its collective with several immediate tasks. First of all, it was essential to quickly provide an expert evaluation of the value of the documents, to destroy files with lapsed storage dates while files with permanent and extended storage dates had to be moved from the temporary archival repositories to permanent ones and thereby establish the necessary conditions for storing the documents and employing them in scientific and practical purposes.

For carrying out this work the staff of archival personnel was significantly increased, including science associates, and a special subunit was temporarily

assigned there recruited from servicemen with a secondary, specialized and higher education. This made it possible over a period of several years to carry out one of the most labor-intensive jobs of putting the archival documents in order.

Because of the increased employment of documents from the Great Patriotic War by researchers as well as in carrying out letters and requests, the archives were acutely confronted with the question of the need to describe documentary materials in the most pertinent holdings, to organize the archival documents by holdings and draw up new inventories. The archives commenced this work in 1951.

Many participants in the war, in turning to TsAMO SSSR, addressed their letters to the archives of the Great Patriotic War and there was a certain grain of truth in this. The main wealth of the archives (over 10 million files) is made up of documents from the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. These disclose the world historical victory of the Soviet people and their Armed Forces in the struggle against the Nazi invaders and Japanese militarists and they show the leading role of the CPSU in organizing the enemy's defeat. The archival materials reflect the fighting of the field forces, formations and units of the Soviet Army on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War and take up the activities of the military councils of the fronts and the armies, the political bodies, the party and Komsomol organizations, the military art of the military leaders and staffs of all levels, the work of the rear bodies and the international aid to the peoples of the European states in their liberation from the Nazi yoke. The mass heroism and self-sacrifice of the Soviet soldiers are shown as well as their total dedication to the cause of the Communist Party and to the Soviet motherland.

On the basis of the archival documentary holdings, fundamental military history works have been written and published including the 12-volume "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], the six-volume "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny Sovetskogo Soyuz 1941-1945" [History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union of 1941-1945], "50 let Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil SSSR" [Fifty Years of the Soviet Armed Forces of the USSR], "Razgrom nemetsko-fashistskikh voysk pod Moskvoy" [The Defeat of the Nazi Troops at Moscow], "Velikaya pobeda na Volge" [The Great Victory on the Volga], "Bitva za Leningrad" [The Battle of Leningrad], "Bitva pod Kurskom" [The Battle of Kursk], "Posledniy shturm" [The Last Storming] and many others.

The archival documents are widely employed in working out the problems of Soviet military and historical science, the present-day organizational development of the Armed Forces, in the writing of memoirs, artistic and documentary works, the scripts of documentary films, the histories of military districts, field forces and associations. Using the documents of the archives, books have been written by outstanding Soviet military leaders such as I.Kh. Bagramyan, S.S. Biryuzov, A.A. Grechko, G.K. Zhukov, I.S. Konev, R.Ya. Malinovskiy, K.S. Moskalenko, K.K. Rokossovskiy, V.I. Chuykov and others. The writers V.A. Bogomolov, M.G. Bragin, Ye.A. Dolmatovskiy,

K.M. Simonov and A.B. Chakovskiy worked a long time with the documents from the archives.

Today in the reading room of the archives, next to veterans of the Great Patriotic War, a new generation of researchers is at work including graduate students and students of the military schools, co-workers from the scientific research institutions and museums and students from VUZes. Over the years the archives have existed, over 20,000 researchers have worked in them and more than 2 million files were used by them. For productive research, in the reading room there is a library of scientific reference literature on the documentary composition of the archives and the history of the Great Patriotic War as well as the microfilm holdings. A dining room and hotel are available to the researchers.

In the aim of putting archival documents into scientific circulation and satisfying the ever-increasing requests of the researchers, the archives during all the postwar period have been actively engaged in publishing archival documents. The archives have prepared collections of documents on the most important operations of the Great Patriotic War, on the combat operations of the tank, certain combined-arms and air armies as well as the collections: "Organizatsiya i vedeniye boyevykh deystviy nochyu" [The Organization and Conduct of Nighttime Operation], "Nastupleniye s forsirovaniyem rek" [An Offensive With the Crossing of Rivers] and others. In addition, co-workers from the archives have taken an active part in preparing such collections of documents as "Prikazy Verkhovnogo glavnokomanduyushchego v period Velikoy Otechestvennoy Voyny Sovetskogo Soyuz" [Orders of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief During the Period of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union], "Sovetskaya Ukraina v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945 gg." [The Soviet Ukraine During the Years of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945], "Moldavskaya SSR v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Moldavia During the Years of the Great Patriotic War], "Boyevoye bratstvo narodov SSSR" [Combat Fraternity of the Soviet Peoples], "Osvoboditelnaya missiya Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v Yevrope vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne" [The Liberation Mission of the Soviet Armed Forces in Europe During World War II] and many others. The TsAMO have discovered and prepared the military documents for collections on the history of Soviet-Bulgarian, Soviet-Hungarian, Soviet-Korean, Soviet-Mongolian, Soviet-Polish, Soviet-French, Soviet-Czechoslovak and Soviet-Yugoslav relations.

Thematic selections of documents have been systematically published in the periodic press for the jubilee dates in the history of the nation and its Armed Forces, copies of these are displayed at exhibits, in museums and in the rooms of combat glory of the formations and units.

In the activities of the archives an important place is held by reference work. Millions of Soviet people whose fates were touched by the war have turned to the archives with the most diverse questions: for confirmation of service and decorations, about wounds and concussions, on establishing the fate of relatives and close friends, on a tour of duty in the operational army and so forth. The number of letters and requests has increased in line with the celebrating of significant dates in the life of our country and army as well as with the broadening of benefits for participants of the Great

Patriotic War and for the families of persons killed. Thus, the celebrating of the 40th anniversary of the Great Patriotic War stirred the memories of the veterans and provided a new creative impetus for the journalists, writers and scholars. In 1985 alone, the archives answered 640,000 letters and requests. Starting in 1947 up to the present, over 19 million archival references have been given out. In 1985, the archival reception rooms received 22,700 persons.

TsAMO takes an active part in providing methodical and practical aid to the archives of the military districts and groups of forces, and to the clerical staffs of the troop units and facilities. On its basis assemblies are periodically organized and held for the chiefs of the military archives and here they thoroughly examine the state of archival work in the Soviet Army and Navy and generalize the advanced experience of the military archives.

For extensive work in systematizing and organizing the storage of documents and for active participation in military history research, in April 1955 the TsAMO SSSR received a Diploma from the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. On 24 April 1985, for successes achieved in production activities aimed at the effective use of documentary materials in the interests of military scientific, party political, reference and historical work, for overfulfilling the plan and adopted socialist obligations, for active work in the communist indoctrination of workers and employees and for successfully resolving questions of social and cultural development, the TsAMO SSSR was awarded the title "Collective of Communist Labor" with the presentation of a Red Banner and a diploma.

The high praise for what has been achieved is primarily the affair of the entire collective and particularly the veterans. At present, around 70 co-workers have been employed 25 years and more in the archives. Among them are Col V.P. Nazarov, Lt Col V.I. Kovalev, Lt Cols (Res) A.A. Alekseyev, B.T. Verbitskiy, F.I. Kozlyuk, S.Ye. Maksayev, V.V. Tarakanov, the employees S.P. Abramova, R.N. Afanasyeva, N.T. Vladimirova, M.I. Zolotareva, V.A. Kemenova, Ye.V. Krysanova, O.N. Vyrova, A.M. Parkhomenko, N.A. Titova, L.I. Shalayeva, V.S. Yakovleva and many others.

The collective of the archives has received the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress with a feeling of great responsibility and at present is hard at work carrying them out.

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